



L-Awtorità tax-Xandir
MALTA
Broadcasting Authority

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



L-Awtorità tax-Xandir
MALTA
Broadcasting Authority

Annual Report 2020

Published in 2021 by the

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The Hon. Dr Robert Abela K.U.O.M., B.A., LL.D., Adv. Trib. Melit, M.P.

Prime Minister

Office of the Prime Minister

Auberge Castille

Valletta

March 2020

Honourable Prime Minister,

Broadcasting Authority Annual Report 2020

In accordance with sub-article (1) of Article 30 of the Broadcasting Act, Chapter 350 of the Laws of Malta, we have pleasure in forwarding the Broadcasting Authority's Annual Report for 2020

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'F. Farrugia', written over a horizontal line.

Frank V. Farrugia
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Spiteri', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Joanna Spiteri
Chief Executive Officer

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1. Message from the Chairman

The year 2020 will remain on the radar for many years to come due to the Covid-19 pandemic during which the whole world stood still and nothing could proceed with the normal pace as before. This was also my full year as the Chairman of this Constitutional Authority. Things had to change accordingly to adapt to what some preferred to call it the new norm. This was not the time for the Broadcasting Authority to stop and watch the days go by, but rather it was a time for reflection and fast action with caution at the same time whilst paving the way forward considering the constant challenges that the pandemic as well as technological advancements brought with them. It was also a time for adaptation to a new method of working since broadcasting was another essential service which had to continue to operate albeit in a different way.



More than ever broadcasting was one of the most, and I dare say also, the most important source of information the Maltese population could adhere to especially when health restrictions and new rules were being announced through daily press conferences that were broadcast live. This was like the only regular appointment the public had whilst most of the employees were working remotely, children were adapting to online tuition and elderly and the vulnerable were advised to stay indoors. Covid restrictions and new regulations were being announced from time to time with updates on new cases and new rules to follow to restrict as much as possible the spreading of this deadly virus. Health informative messages, public service announcements, press conferences announcing Covid19 measures became more frequent during this period and the Broadcasting Authority had to be at the forefront to watch that the public is well informed in such circumstances.

Notwithstanding the limitations and drawbacks brought forward by the Covid19 pandemic, the Authority faced all the challenges and was resilient to make sure that broadcasting was not only still running but that through regulation, policy and at times guidance, the broadcasting services would be able to provide an efficient service in such cases of health urgencies. The Broadcasting Authority shifted its work remotely and hence had to make drastic immediate changes but made sure that broadcasting services kept going through these tough times.

The Maltese society had to adapt to the new challenges the pandemic brought with it, but the same society has been changing and developing through time. It was quite a challenging experience as new services became popular such as an increase in drive in cinema applications and short term community radio stations. Hence, considering that the Broadcasting Authority which was set in very different times way back in 1961, when broadcast more often than not referred to television and radio; in this present age a required makeover is needed to adapt to changes including technological developments. Notwithstanding its main objective to help the Maltese public better understand how its value and diversities shape their unique personalities the Broadcasting Authority continues regulating local broadcasting in open flexible ways whilst fostering creativity and better programming and better quality. The year 2020 was indeed a time to look through the past, change and engage in the present whilst planning a better future. It was also the year in which the AudioVisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) was transposed into the national legislation and this is also a sign of the changing times in broadcasting. This is the legal framework establishing the fundamental principles for a safe, pluralistic audiovisual media landscape in Europe. Such Directive widened the scope and also

included a new approach for video-sharing platforms to protect minors, to tackle hate speech and to abide by basic advertising standards.

This is just a taste of the actions and work plan that has started in 2020 and which the Broadcasting Authority will continue to embark on over the coming years. Future challenges are just on the doorstep primarily due to technological developments in the sector and the Authority has laid out plans which would start getting results in the year to come. Also the Authority has started working on a proposed overhaul of the Broadcasting Act and its Subsidiary Legislation, which has been in place for a good number of years and which needs to reflect the changes in the evolving broadcasting industry but also to reflect the changes in society by and large.

Looking back 2020 was not an easy year – the challenges are getting bigger, not smaller. Let's hope that as the Authority approaches its 60th anniversary on 29th September 2021 the world would be a better place and the Broadcasting Authority would have emerged stronger than ever whilst surviving another sixty years to come. I am sure that with the input of the Board members and all the operational staff at the Broadcasting Authority, we would be successful in our endeavours for the next year. Much more work, initiatives and projects are waiting for us in the coming year and I am confident that while we made strides in 2020 notwithstanding all the difficulties, the next year will surely be another fruitful year. The work that lies ahead will be as diverse and challenging as that in 2020 and the Authority will do its utmost to foster an appropriate environment to regulate the broadcasting industry while keeping a balance between the stakeholders and the media users. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Board members, management and staff of the Authority for their commitment and invaluable contribution throughout the year.

Frank V. Farrugia
Chairman

March 2021

2. Review of the Year by the CEO in chronology

In 2020 has been a year of challenges and looking back, the broadcasting content saw a myriad of changes due to changes in technology but also due to societal needs brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic which had a tremendous impact. Throughout this part allow me to go through all the highlights of 2020 for the Broadcasting Authority, a surreal year which shook us but made us think outside the box as well. Between the four walls of the Broadcasting Authority it made us focus on other priorities



which needed to be addressed to be able to operate in a remote way but also we made sure that such pandemic would not stop us from continuing with our projects and initiatives.

This chapter will provide an exact review of what happened in a chronological order month by month as they occurred.

January

Courtesy visit by the Broadcasting Authority to H.E. President George Vella - 6 January 2020

After the appointment of Mr Frank V. Farrugia as Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority on 6th November 2019 and the re-appointment of the Board Members (Dr Peter Fenech, Charlo Bonnici, Francis Ghirxi and Dr Alessandro Lia), a courtesy visit was made to His Excellency President Dr George Vella at San Anton Palace. This took place on Monday, 6th January 2020 at San Anton Palace during which the Authority presented a donation to the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation. The Board was accompanied by the Chief Executive, Dr Joanna Spiteri, and the Secretary to the Board, Dr Simon Manicolo.



The Broadcasting Authority meets with IGM at the BA Offices - 14 January 2020

The Broadcasting Authority met with IGM officials in January 2020 during which time IGM was going through a transition period that included restructuring. The meeting covered various topics such as the role of the Broadcasting Authority vis a vis journalism in Malta, training cooperation between BA and IGM, the use of Maltese Language in broadcasting and Journalism Awards among other. Present for the meeting on behalf of IGM were Mr Nigel Mifsud – Secretary General, and Mr Michael Schiavone, Treasurer and Mr Dominic Aquilina. On behalf of the Broadcasting Authority Mr Frank V. Farrugia – Chairman and Dr Joanna Spiteri, Chief Executive Officer were present.



February

lċ-Ċertifikat fil-Qari tal-Provi bil-Malti – Proofreading Certificate in Maltese - 14 February 2020

One of the aims of the Broadcasting Authority is to promote quality in broadcasting and one of the issues which is highly criticized is the use of Maltese language in broadcasting. Hence the Broadcasting Authority is obliged to help and support media people who work in this industry and provide training whenever possible. Thus once again in 2020, the Broadcasting Authority sponsored a number of journalists and media people for the Certificate Course in Proof Reading of the Maltese Language - *lċ-Ċertifikat fil-Qari tal-Provi bil-Malti*. The beneficiaries were: Charmaine Vella (ONE); Frederick Zammit (103) and Deborah Cilia (ONE). Present for the ceremony of the sponsorship were Mr Frank V. Farrugia Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority and Dr Joanna Spiteri CEO.



March

Covid-19 pandemic

Following the outbreak of Covid-19, the Broadcasting Authority offices had to operate remotely when necessary, however the services were not suspended and continued to give its hundred percent vis a vis the implementation of the broadcasting policy. All services continued and any queries or requests could be made online or by phone. Furthermore, the Broadcasting Authority called on the public to rely on official sources and statements in order not to induce reckless and unnecessary alarm and to report such offences with the station concerned, copied to the Authority. More than ever, broadcasting was deemed an essential service to society particularly at times of pandemic wherein the citizens needed to be informed by means of reliable sources about the situation and what measures needed to be taken not to spread this Covid-19 virus.

In March the Broadcasting Authority issued a press release PR 04/20 in relation to broadcasting during Covid-19 in which the Authority urged journalists and broadcasters to be cautious in reporting developments related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the Authority issued circulars 01/20 and 2/20 respectively on broadcast related to the period of the Coronavirus pandemic in view of directions provided by the Health Authorities during such a delicate time. These circulars obliged broadcasters to exclude studio audiences during programmes to help mitigate the spread of the virus. Moreover, the Authority envisaged that any programmes recorded prior to the COVID-19 period, should state so whilst being broadcast so as not to mislead the public. The Authority could understand that during the partial lockdown, the broadcasting services were essential mainly as a reliable source of information but also to serve the function of entertainment and education in these hard times. This was quite a challenge for broadcasting services due to financial difficulties which such a pandemic incurred. Notwithstanding this, the Authority could observe that the broadcasting services were still being given as far as possible.

April

Health restrictions and remote working

During April 2020 the Broadcasting Authority offices remained closed following the outbreak of Covid-19 just a month earlier, whilst continued to watch attentively and follow Health Instructions and Restrictive Measures as announced by Health Authorities to help flatten the curve.

Notwithstanding this, the Authority still had a number of complaints to investigate and an increase in the number of licence applications to be processed. Quite an increase in short term community radios were processed since radio broadcasting was mainly used by Parish Churches to provide mass and prayers for its parishioners in view of the fact that Churches had also to close down due to Covid-19 restrictions. During these months it showed that radio broadcasting is highly an essential service and it is a useful means not only for information and music but also to deliver religious content in times like these. It ended up being the primary source of information and dissemination of Catholic values.

May

Public Consultation to Amend the Broadcasting Act Cap. 350

The Broadcasting Authority participated in the public consultation on Amendments to the Broadcasting Act, Cap.350 which was launched in May 2020. The EU issues new directives on broadcasting and in this regard the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (Directive 2010/13/EU) will be amended by the new Directive (EU) 2018/1808 issued by the European Parliament. This needed to be implemented in the Broadcasting Law, Cap. 350 of the Laws of Malta by 19 September 2020. As a result, a public consultation opened in the Ministry within the Office of the Prime Minister on amendments to the Broadcasting Law to implement this Directive by the European Union.

Għargħur Tower switch off

In line with its responsibilities, the Broadcasting Authority is responsible for the Għargħur Transmitting Site – the hub of all the radio broadcasting. During this period, the Broadcasting Authority had to switch off the Għargħur Tower for inspection and other maintenance works as required. During this year, the Broadcasting Authority has commissioned a number of studies to analyse the conditions of the Għargħur transmitting tower. Switch off also occurred subsequently during the following months of June, July, August, September & November to enable continuation of works. More information related to Għargħur Transmission Tower are included in the chapter on ICT & Projects.



Demise – ex BA chairperson Anthony J. Tabone

During 2020 on May 10th the Authority and Staff were saddened to learn of the passing of Mr Anthony J. Tabone, aged 75, who served as Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority between 1 January 2011 until 31 December 2015. He was known to be a good listener and acted calmly even at times of tense situations. Anthony J. Tabone led the Authority's Board with great professionalism and dedication.

June

On June the Broadcasting Authority offices opened again in line with Directives issued by the Government and other measures as announced by the Health Authorities. The Authority took the necessary measures to safeguard the health of its employees. Measures included the installation of hand sanitisers at the reception area and on each floor of the building. The offices were professionally sanitised before the employees were physically present at the office. Temperature was taken to all staff and any other visitor to the premises. The offices were re arranged to maintain social distancing among employees within the same building.

Impact of Covid in licensing

As stated earlier, the Covid-19 pandemic brought with an increase in the licensing of relatively new services. The Authority processed a number of licences in drive in cinemas applications. Given that cinema halls had to close their doors, and Summer months faced an absence in the usual social activities, other facilities were put forward and drive in cinemas were on the cards. The increase in drive in cinema applications was only natural given that all cultural events were banned. Although these increased drastically, however, these remained one off events which were spread over a few days in a week. However, the increase of short term community radios persisted and provided religious services particularly the celebration of mass and the rosary.

July

Social media initiative

In July the Authority decided to be more active on social media and started Throwback Thursday post on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BroadcastingAuthorityMalta/> whilst making use of old photos that were initially used in the early days of broadcasting in Malta as cutaways also known as capture cards. The collection has over thousand capture cards and every Thursday a different theme is selected together with three photos from the collection available mostly in black and white or sepia that vary from scenery, landmarks, paintings, historical and cultural events among others. This commitment to engage with FB audience is still on going.



August

IIJ web symposium

In August the CEO Dr Joanna Spiteri participated in the IIJ web symposium entitled: **International Media and COVID-19 19: Challenges for Journalists and Educators**, held on August 16, 2020. Dr Spiteri's presentation focused on how COVID-19 affected Maltese media and the policies which were developed to address the situation. Dr Spiteri highlighted key attributes of Maltese media and delved on the direct impact of the pandemic on the media environment. It was also emphasised that the ownership of Maltese media is distributed between the state, political parties, and the Church, and therefore each of these institutions exert significant control on the way media functions. Media ownership follows the 'polarized pluralist model' and two forerunning private stations are owned by the two biggest political parties. Despite the structure of media ownership, media in Malta has always functioned to inform, educate, and entertain people. The primary responsibility of media during the pandemic was to provide impartial and accurate news to citizens.

Emphasizing the importance of the role of the public service broadcaster, Dr. Spiteri stated that because information was available from myriad sources like online news, blogs, social media platforms, and citizen journalism, the broadcaster was required to monitor and regulate what was being cascaded among citizens by the new age media channels.

The Broadcasting Authority as the media regulatory body outlined the role that media was expected to undertake in the pandemic and worked towards ensuring impartiality in radio and television broadcasting services. Undertaking a pioneering role in safeguarding public interest, the Authority set up guidelines mandating media channels to devise programs for children, like games, crafts, and other educational content, during the morning and afternoon telecast slots. The authoritative body also issued circulars to the media to publish reports gathered from official sources only, as an effort to counter spread of fake news.



The CEO of the Broadcasting Authority, elaborated how during COVID-19 pandemic Health Superintendent of Malta organized several press briefings between March 14 and June 3, 2020, providing medical information to journalists, television, and radio channels. The medical information was subsequently broadcasted or reported to the public. CEO highlighted complaints received by the Authority, related to prime ministerial messages, press conferences, and participation of different ministries in discussions, and the manner in which they were addressed. CEO cited ruling of the Board of the Broadcasting Authority in favour of the Prime Minister whose involvement, it felt, was necessary so that the public could be kept informed about the national emergency situation. The Broadcasting Authority denied permission to live question and answer sessions during press conferences, apprehending that it could lead to unwanted political or partisan comment. This, according to CEO, went a long way in avoiding political controversy during the crisis. CEO concluded on the threat of fake news and dissemination of misinformation in the age of the internet. She highlighted the importance of collaboration between the Broadcasting Authority and other European Regulators to minimize these challenges whilst safeguarding freedom of information protected.

Attendance of Parliamentary Committees

The Committee for the Consideration of an Additional Bill (*Kumitat għall-Konsiderazzjoni ta' Abbozz ta' Ligi Aġġunt*) met during the months of August and September to discuss the transposition of the Audio Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). Following a consultation period, the draft bill moved to parliamentary committee stage. After a total of three parliamentary committee stage meetings (20th July 2020, 5th August 2020 and 30th September 2020), MPs agreed on a final text which was presented for third reading in Parliament.

Present for the meetings that were held in July, August and September was held on 5th August 2020 Hon. Minister Dr Carmelo Abela, Hon. Glenn Bedingfield, Hon. Jean Claude Micallef, Dr Mark Vassallo, Hon Dr Therese Commodini Cachia, Hon. Karl Gouder and Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis chaired the meeting. On behalf of the Broadcasting Authority, the Chairman Mr Frank V Farrugia, the Chief Executive Officer Dr Joanna Spiteri and Mr Randolph Micallef Head of Monitoring Department were present during this meeting and gave their feedback, input and any other interpretation required.

September

Courtesy visit by the Broadcasting Authority to H.E. President Dr George Vella - 15 September 2020
BA working plan



During this courtesy visit a summarised work plan of the Broadcasting Authority was discussed, particularly the challenges which faces broadcasting and the projects which are planned by the Authority for the coming years. This courtesy visit led to the official ceremony to celebrate the 59th Anniversary of the Broadcasting Authority held at San Anton on 29th September 2020 hosted by the President of Malta.

59th Anniversary of the Broadcasting Authority held at San Anton -29 September 2020

The President of Malta hosted the Broadcasting Authority for this event during which a BA work plan for the coming years was presented and a study done by the Broadcasting Authority covering a data assessment on the portrayal of gender in current affairs programmes was presented during this event. At the end of this event, the Authority also presented a donation to the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation.





October

Cordial visit by Broadcasting Authority to The Archbishop of Malta Mons. Charles Jude Scicluna



From left to right – Kevin Papargiocopolo, Head of Media, Archdiocese of Malta, Dr Joanna Spiteri, BA CEO, Dr Peter Fenech – board member, Archbishop Charles Jude Scicluna, Mr Frank V. Farrugia – BA Chairman, Mr Francis Ghirxi – BA board member and Mr Charlo Bonnici – BA Board Member. (Missing from the picture is Dr Alessandro Lia – BA board member)

On the occasion of the 59th anniversary since the setting up of the Broadcasting Authority, the Chairman of the Authority, Mr Frank V. Farrugia together with the Chief Executive, Dr Joanna Spiteri and Board Members met the Archbishop Charles Jude Scicluna during a cordial meeting held on 15th October 2020, at the Curia in Floriana.

During the meeting, the situation of the stations and broadcasting was discussed. They also spoke about the role of the regulator in a society where the media is constantly developing. It was emphasized that the Broadcasting Authority is there to protect the public interest, media consumers and the protection of minors and the vulnerable. Therefore, despite regulating the media, the Authority has a responsibility to see that the media is providing good quality programming notwithstanding the criticism it receives that it not moving with the times.

The Archbishop also spoke about the need for better quality in local broadcasting, in general as well as about the difficulties brought about by the pandemic for the media since advertising on which media organisations depend has decreased. Despite the current situation, the Church continued to provide daily mass service and for this the Archbishop thanked in particular the public service broadcasting for the cooperation and support he found so that Mass reaches the homes and thus the Church continues to be of service and support to the people.

Broadcasting Authority offers a sponsorship for 30th Edition of Malta Journalism Awards

During a short ceremony held at the Broadcasting Authority offices this morning, Mr Nigel Mifsud, Secretary General of the Institute of Maltese Journalists met with the Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority Mr Frank V. Farrugia, to receive a sponsorship as part of this year's 30th Edition of the Malta Journalism Awards. This came after discussions that the Broadcasting Authority had with IGM during the past months. They discussed the Authority's contribution and support for these awards over the past 18 years. The Chairman of the Authority Mr Frank V. Farrugia stressed on the importance of journalism and envisaged that the sponsorship will tangibly help to achieve this goal while emphasizing the importance for ongoing training to improve the level whilst meeting high and professional standards. Mr Farrugia referred to the times we are living in and how important factual news is whilst he wished every success to IGM in their work as well as for the Awards event which were to be held in November.

Mr Nigel Mifsud, Secretary General of the Institute of Maltese Journalists said that the Broadcasting Authority was a supporter of these Awards which have been held for 30 years and thanked the Authority for showing its support once again. Mr Mifsud stressed the importance of not only recognising the work of journalists but also to investing in quality of journalism in Malta as had been discussed with the Authority. He added that this year there was a representation from all Media Houses and a record of submissions which showed the willingness of journalists. Mr Mifsud said that with the collaboration of the Broadcasting Authority it will be possible to develop educational aspects for journalists to further improve the level of journalism in Malta.



The Chief Executive of the Broadcasting Authority Dr Joanna Spiteri said that the Authority recognizes the commitment and recognition of journalists and this is part of the sponsorship that the Authority gives to IGM but does not want to stop there and therefore the Authority will be offering training, because journalism is not only important in a democratic society, but also important to have professionalism not only in terms of quality but because the Authority has an obligation towards the viewers therefore who is providing the service of journalism must provide a good job to all viewers.

The event was streamed live and is available online:

<https://www.facebook.com/BroadcastingAuthorityMalta>



Head of Reserach and Communication – Farewell



Mr Mario Axiak, Dip.B.M., B.A. (Hons.) Management, M.B.A. (Maastricht) - Head Research and Communications retired after 20 years at the Broadcasting Authority. Following a Diploma in Business Management, Mr Axiak started his working career with the Malta Development Corporation. Two years later, he continued his studies at the University of Malta where in 1983 he was conferred an honours degree in Business Management; during which time he was posted by the Malta Development Corporation at various parastatal industries. In 1999, he joined the Broadcasting Authority as Head of Research and Communications. He was involved in many projects undertaken by the Broadcasting Authority including public seminars; training workshops for broadcasters both locally and at RTÉ, the Irish Public Service Broadcaster; executive producer of the Broadcasting Authority's Annual Programme Awards, 1999-2003; as well as in various publications of the Broadcasting Authority. Mr Axiak has furthered his studies obtaining a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Maastricht in April 2007.



October - virtual meeting with Users

As indicated earlier the Authority has embarked in a number of projects at the Gharghur transmission site, the Authority held a first meeting with Gharghur Tower Users was held virtually to update users about the performance and progress taking place at the Transmission Tower site whilst inform them of the need for further switchoff times envisaged due to works.



Online educational session with Terence Carlisle – former BBC Producer

Enhancing Broadcasting: an overview

The Broadcasting Authority organised an online training session as part of the Authority's strategy to reach out to all stakeholders in the industry. The session entitled 'Enhancing Broadcasting: an overview' was initially planned to take place virtually however due to technical issues it was recorded, and the presentation disseminated to stakeholders.



The speaker Mr Terence Carlisle, is a former producer at BBC for 15 years focused on the following topics during this seminar :-

- Structuring a programme (focusing on: News; Sports News; Music Programmes; and lifestyle programmes)
- The importance of continuity and cross promotion;
- The necessity for producers' guidelines in the current cultural climate and Community listening to establish feedback on programmes via social media from listeners/viewers

Publication of online BA Postcards

As a run up for the 60th Anniversary, the Broadcasting Authority decided to post on its Facebook page a postcard every 29th of each month from October 29th, 2020 until 29th September 2021. Each postcard depicting five years since the setting up of the Authority starting from 29th September 1961 until 29th September 2021.



NOVEMBER

Courtesy visit by PBS Chairperson Prof. Carmen Sammut and PBS CEO Mr Charles Dalli

Both entities spoke about ways of how to improve quality in broadcasting, technically but also with regards to content. This was one of the priorities of both the public broadcaster and the regulator. The public broadcaster understands that it has a particular remit amidst the Maltese media landscape, but it also needs to bring up the quality in broadcasting. They also discussed on the importance which needs to be given to radio broadcasting. Radio can be considered a particular medium which attracts a particular audience and hence audience expects certain type of programming.

Another topic on the use of Maltese language in broadcasting was also raised during the meeting and PBS showed commitment on overcoming challenges and work harder to provide content which make better use of Maltese language.

Among other topics which were discussed was the challenges being faced with regards issues of vulnerability and adherence to broadcasting legislation. And how Covid-19 pandemic effected the production and the transmission of PBS programming.



Malta Journalism Awards

The final ceremony held by IGM on 14th November 2020 and the Broadcasting Authority being one of IGM's collaborators for this specific event was present during this ceremony where a total of 18 awards were awarded.



Gender Representation Guidelines Committee

The Broadcasting Authority is aware that the media can shape public perception on gender roles and gender issues in general and thus is in the process of compiling guidelines to pave the way to introduce new perspectives on the participation of men and women particularly in discussion programmes. In this regard the Broadcasting Authority together with the National Commission for the promotion of Equality (NCPE) set up a committee to compile Gender Representation Guidelines for discussion programmes. The first introductory meeting led by BA CEO was held online on Monday 23rd November 2020.



These guidelines will target media organisations to draw new ideas in programming for a more gender balanced discussion programmes.

The aim of the Committee is:

- Drafting of guidelines initially for a fair representation of male and female in discussion programmes. This could then be applied to a broader spectrum of programmes.
- Encouraging full participation of men and women in such programmes.
- Encouraging the presence of both men and women to include them in discussion programmes pertaining to current affairs issues.
- Encouraging producers to be more gender sensitive when planning and producing their programmes.
- Introducing gender sensitive language in such programmes.
- Encouraging a fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes.
- Encouraging producers to be sensitive to gender inequalities and portray and treat women and men in a fair and just manner.

The Guidelines were to be finalised by mid 2021 and were to be produced in both English and Maltese.

DECEMBER

COVID-19 Facemask

The Broadcasting Authority Facemask – A corporate image

As the Covid-19 pandemic persists and cases increase across the globe, wearing a facemask became one of the most powerful and compulsory provisions to slow and stop the spread of the deadly virus. In this scenario, it was imperative that as a regulator, the Broadcasting Authority sends out a clear message of concern. The purpose of the facemask with the Broadcasting Authority logo is two-fold:

- Internally - for Health and Safety purposes among its employees
- Externally - for the portrayal of uniformity and professionalism

The Authority emphasized that it values the safety of the team and demonstrates empathy while sending a clear message about the responsibility and seriousness of the authority and its concern of the wellbeing of its employees but also externally to office visitors and other stakeholders.

Having a mask with the Broadcasting Authority logo is part of the authority's strategy of branding the broadcasting regulator. The Authority wants to portray an image of professionalism through a team who not only look and perform professionally but can be reliable and committed as individuals who all work for the same Authority. A corporate mask helps maintain an image that remains in the eyes of the audience and that instigate reliability and commitment.



The Chief Executive Dr Joanna Spiteri donated a facemask of the Broadcasting Authority with the Authority's logo to the National Textiles Collection which is at the Inquisitor's Palace - National Museum of Ethnography, Birgu. In attendance Mr Dylan Cachia (INQ Curatorial Coordinating Support).

3. Staff Recruitment

Notwithstanding Covid-19 restrictions, in March the Authority published a Call for Applications for the Head of Research and Communications. Due to Covid-19 pandemic the interviews were delayed until finally in July 2020 the Authority recruited Mr Roderick Caruana in the position of Head of Research and Communications following the retirement of Mr Mario Axiak who had been in the post for a more than 20 years. However, Mr Caruana resigned in August 2020 and the Authority had to appoint a new Head of Research and Communications. In September the new Head of Research and Communications Dr Joanne Muscat was appointed following the same call for applications.

In June the Authority published a Call for Applications for the Head of ICT and Project Manager. This is a new position within the Authority as the need arise that the Authority needs professional personnel in IT and projects since it was embarking on new IT projects and other projects particularly those related to the Għargħur transmission site. In August the Authority appointed Mr Chris Attard as Head of ICT and Projects.

4. Administrative Offences

In terms of the Article 41 of the Broadcasting Act, the offences listed in the Fifth Schedule to the Act are administrative offences and punishable by the Authority. In determining whether a person is guilty or otherwise of an administrative offence, it is the duty on the part of the Authority to ensure that the principles of a fair and public hearing are observed and guaranteed.

In the event that the Authority is satisfied that the person has committed an offence as listed in the First Column of the Fifth Schedule under the Act, it may:

Issue a warning in writing; or

- a) Direct the offender not to broadcast for a period of time; or
- b) Impose an administrative penalty as established in the second column of the Fifth Schedule to the Broadcasting Act, including applying a suspended penalty.
- c) The Authority may choose to apply separately or concurrently the measures listed in (b) and (c).

During the year in review, the Chief Executive issued a total of 13 charges against broadcasting stations. The issuing of charges and the procedures related to the hearing thereof are regulated under Article 41 of the Broadcasting Act and Subsidiary Legislation 350.07.

During these proceedings the Authority acts as a quasi-judicial body where the Chief Executive acts as a prosecutor, which role is completely distinct from the other functions pertaining to his office.

The table hereunder represents the total number of charges heard and decided upon by the Authority in 2020 according to station.

2020	Station	Charges
Radio	103	1
Television	ONE	2
	TVM	9
	NET TV	1
	Total	13

Station	Legislative Provision	Decision
103 Mid Morning Mag – 22 nd May 2020	Paragraph 4 of Third Schedule of the Broadcasting Act	The charge was upheld but a warning was issued
ONE Ilsien in-Nisa - 21 st May 2020	Article 16K(a) of the Broadcasting Act	The charge was not proved and the station was found not guilty
Arani Issa – 7 th ,14 th , 21 st December 2019	Article 16K(a) of the Broadcasting Act	The station was found guilty and a charge was issued
TVM X Factor – 19th January – 19th January 2020	Para 15 of Third Schedule	The station was found guilty and a charge was issued
Sibtek – 11th, 18th, 25th April 2020, 9th and 16th May 2020	Para 15 of Third Schedule	The station was found guilty and a charge was issued
TVM News – 30th March 2020	Para 4.1.7 of S.L. 350.15 Requirements as to Standards and Practice Applicable to Participation in Media Programmes of Vulnerable persons	The charge was not proved and the station was found not guilty
Sibtek – 4th January 2020	Para 15 of Third Schedule	The station was found guilty and a charge was issued
Gadgets – 16th May 2020	Article 16K(a)	The station was found guilty and a charge was issued
XTRA Sajf – 20th August 2020	Para 1 of Third Schedule	The station admitted the charge and was charged a reduced penalty
XTRA Sajf – 13th August 2020	Para 1 of Third Schedule	The station admitted the charge and was charged a reduced penalty
Animal Diaries – 24th October 2020	Article 16K(a) of the Broadcasting Act	The charge was upheld but a warning was issued

Popolin - 20th October 2020	Article 16L(4) of the Broadcasting Act and Article 13(2)(f) of the Broadcasting Act	Not yet summoned
NET TV NET News - 28th April 2020	Para 4.1.10 Para 4.1.7 of S.L. 350.15 Requirements as to Standards and Practice Applicable to Participation in Media Programmes of Vulnerable persons	The charge was not proved and the station was found not guilty

5. Broadcasting Licences

Article 10 (2) of the Broadcasting Act stipulates :-

“No person may provide sound or television broadcasting services in Malta for Malta or any part thereof without the licence in writing of the Authority, nor may any person retransmit sound or television broadcasting services from Malta to any foreign state without the licence in writing of the Authority”.

During 2020 the Authority licenced the following services :-

- Community radio stations
- Digital radio station
- Drive in cinema

5.1 Radio Broadcasting Licences

5.1.1 Digital radio stations

During the year in review 1 national digital radio station was licensed.

5.1.2 Community radio stations

Under the Broadcasting Act, licences issued to community radio stations can be of two types:

Long term community radio stations – 3 year term. These community radios operate with an effective radiated power of 12 Watts. This measure ensures that community radio stations do not operate with excessive power, which would result in spillage of the signal beyond the geographical location for which the stations were licensed.

Short term community radio stations – a maximum of one month duration.

During the year under review the Broadcasting Authority issued 17 community radio stations :

- Three for long term radio stations
- Thirteen for short term radio stations

These community radio

5.1.3 Drive in cinemas

The pandemic brought about a new demand for drive in cinemas and the Broadcasting Authority issued three drive in cinemas licences during November and December. These were needed since cultural and social activities were held in the public with people attending needed to follow such events from their own cars.

2020 LICENCE NUMBERS RADIOS - COMMUNITY / NATIONWIDE / DIGITAL / DRIVE-IN CINEMA

Station	Company	Transmitting from	Duration	Valid from	Freq Mhz	Effective Radiated Power Watts	Date of Issue	Station type
IBSA		Tal-Oroqq	3 days	09/05/2020	107.9	0.5	03/01/2020	community
Radio City		Valetta	3 years	23/01/2020	98	11.5	22/01/2020	community
Radju Lauretana		Ghainsielem, Gozo	16 days	29/03/2020	89.3	4.3	11/03/2020	community
tal-Gilju FM		Mqabba	one month	25/03/2020	95.4	3.5	20/03/2020	community
tal-Gilju FM		Mqabba	one month	25/04/2020	95.4	3.5	21/04/2020	community
Radju Bambina		Melleha	one month	07-Apr-20	90.2	9.1	06/05/2020	community
Radju Margerita		Sannat	one month	01/07/2020	96.1	3.5	13/05/2020	community
Radju Margerita		Sannat	one month	01/06/2020	96.1	3.5	21/05/2020	community
tal-Gilju FM		Mqabba	one month	25/06/2020	95.4	3.5	27/05/2020	community
15 t'Awwissu		Orendi	one month	23/07/2020	98.3	3.5	25/05/2020	community
Lehen il-Karmelitani		Zurrieq	one month	01/07/2020	101.4	8.5	26/06/2020	community
Radju Kazin Banda San Filep		Żebbuġ (Malta)	3 years	12/05/2020	106.3	7.6	12/05/2020	community
Radju Margerita		Sannat	3 years	01/08/2020	96.1	3.5	16/07/2020	community
Radju Lauretana		Ghainsielem, Gozo	one month	08/08/2020	89.3	4.3	21/07/2020	community
Radju 15 t'Awwissu		Orendi	one month	08/12/2020	98.3	3.5	02/11/2020	community
Radju Cittadin	In Listening Mode / Dr Roger De Giorgio	Ta' Xblex	4 years	02/06/2020	Digi B Multiplex	NA	01/06/2020	Digital TV
Radju Lauretana		Ghainsielem, Gozo	one month	08/12/2020	89.3	4.3	20/11/2020	community
Radju Lehen il-Karmelitani		Zurrieq	one month	11/12/2020	101.4	8.5	23/11/2020	community
356 Group		Ta' Qali	December	08	08	08	08	drive-in cinema
Schola Cantorium Jubilate		Gozo	December	08	08	08	08	drive-in cinema
MFCC		ta' Qali	November	08	08	08	08	drive-in cinema

All the services which are licensed by the Broadcasting Authority during the year under review

All the services licensed by the Broadcasting Authority during the year under review

Station	Company name	Valid from	Valid to	Duration
Parliament TV	Parliament	01/02/2018	31/01/2023	5 yrs
Smash	Smash	01/02/2018	31/01/2023	5 yrs
F Living	F Living	01/02/2018	31/01/2023	5 yrs
Xejk	Xejk	01/02/2018	31/01/2023	5 yrs
NET	Net	01/03/2018	28/02/2023	5 yrs
ONE	One	01/03/2018	28/02/2023	5 yrs
iTV	iTV	01/12/2018	31/08/2022	3 yrs 9 mnths
Melita More	Melita Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Melita More HD	Melita Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Melita Weather & Info	Melita Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Melita Promotion Channel	Melita Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs

Malta Stars (Melita)	Melita Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
GO Star HD	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 1 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 2 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 3 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 4 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 5 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 6 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 7 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Total Sports Network 8 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Go Weather & Info	Go Own Broadcast	01/06/2018	31/05/2023	5 yrs
Cablenet Sports 1 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/07/2019	31/05/2023	3 yrs 11 mnths
Cablenet Sports 2 HD (GO)	Go Own Broadcast	01/07/2019	31/05/2023	3 yrs 11 mnths
Zest TV	Satellite TV	10/01/2018	09/01/2022	4 yrs
Motowizja TV	Satellite TV	10/01/2018	09/01/2022	4 yrs
TVRUS	Satellite TV	01/03/2019	28/02/2023	4 yrs
FIGHT24	Satellite TV	01/09/2019	31/08/2023	4 yrs

6. Complaints

6.01 PN vs PBS Ltd – Xarabank [13th March]

The Nationalist Party filed a complaint against PBS regarding Xarabank which was broadcast on 13th March stating that during the Prime Minister was interviewed during the first part of the programme and argued that he defended the position which the Government took during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Nationalist Party said that for the sake of balance it was expected that a representative from the Opposition should have been interviewed during the programme. The Nationalist Party argued that the Prime Minister did not just give information and stating the facts but expressed political arguments and opinions which needed another different viewpoint for the sake of balance and impartiality.

PBS argued that during the programme the Prime Minister explained and gave indications of the measures which were going to be announced by the Government in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. PBS reminded that this was the case in the past when there were other issues of national interests such as the situation in Libya when the then Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi was interviewed during Xarabank on the matter. PBS said that the measures which were going to be announced do not fall under political controversy and hence this interview did not go against Article 119 of the Constitution and it was in conformity with any legal obligation which emanates from the Subsidiary Legislation 350.14.

The Authority analysed this complaint and contended that Xarabank interview on 13th March was an extraordinary transmission in extraordinary circumstances which were developing in view of the break out of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Authority argued that in that particular moment, the public wanted information and clear replies amidst the developing scenario and such information on the measures which were going to be announced in few days time could only be given by the Prime Minister. The information and the replies did not touch any controversial issues and it was purely informative. Hence the Authority did not uphold the complaint.

6.02 PN vs PBS Ltd – Xarabank [20th March]

The Nationalist Party filed a complaint against PBS regarding Xarabank which was broadcast on 20th March arguing that during this programme Minister for Economy and Small Investment Silvio Schembri and Minister for Education and Employment Dr Owen Bonnici spoke about the Government measures and positions regarding Covid-19 measures. The Nationalist Party argued that following an edition of Xarabank of 13th March wherein the Prime Minister was interviewed during the whole programme, PBS yet again interviewed two Ministers and again left out the views of the Opposition. While both Ministers spoke about financial and economical measures, the Opposition did not have any say since nobody from the Opposition bench was invited for the programme. Hence the Nationalist Party argued that PBS did not adhere with Article 119 of the Constitution of Malta and the provisions of impartiality as requested by the Broadcasting Act.

PBS explained that during the programme, Dr Bonnici was not asked political questions but the questions addressed to the Minister were of a practical nature and focused on how online teaching will be proceeding during this pandemic. On the other hand, the interview of Minister Schembri was

balanced by a live interview with CEO of Malta Chamber of SMEs who criticised the Government measures to small businesses.

Following the submissions, the Authority contended that during the programme different viewpoints were put forward, however, the Opposition viewpoint was not presented during the programme. According to the Authority, in this particular case, the views of the Opposition should have been included and should have been presented during the programme. In view of this the programme lacked impartiality and the complaint was upheld. However, no remedy was given.

6.03 Dr Silvio DeBono, Managing Director IDEA Group vs PBS Ltd – Illum ma' Steph [12th May]

Dr Silvio DeBono, managing director of IDEA Group filed a complaint against PBS Ltd regarding the programme Illum ma' Steph broadcast on 12th May saying that it breached Article 21A and 34 of the Broadcasting Act.

Dr De Bono argued that during this programme there was a 10 minute interview with a representative of a company which was participating in a scheme to give accredited training. During this interview, the interviewee spoke about the services and courses being offered and Dr DeBono argued that while promoting this scheme, the interviewee was actually promoting her company. Dr DeBono added that this interview was presented as being purely informative and educational, however, this was actually a paid advert. The station did not identify this slot as paid advertising and thus this also created an unfair competition between the other companies which were part of this scheme. He argued that this unfair treatment was not only suffered by his company but also the other companies which were participating in the MTA scheme to provide accredited training.

On its part PBS explained what happened and how this interview was produced and conducted. It transpired that the presenter was not aware that the interviewee was promoting the company's courses but was under the impression that the interviewee was speaking on behalf of an NGO. PBS noted that the remedy could not be given by the station because when it understood that there was a commercial element, it was bound to provide a 10 minute interview to all organisations and companies which participated in this MTA scheme and that would have been too late since the scheme would have been past its deadline. PBS said that as part of a damage litigation exercise, during one of the programmes following this complaint, MTA CEO was interviewed and all the list of the providers of these courses were shown on screen.

In view of the fact that the remedy could not be given and that the complainant admitted that the complaint was put forward on a matter of a principle as he understood that a remedy could not be given, the Authority upheld the complaint and noted that the interview consisted of surreptitious advertising but more important that there was an imbalance in the information given by exposing just one company. The Authority warned the station that for future it should verify all the information and verify the information given by guests before participating in a programme.

6.04 PN vs PBS Ltd – press conference address by the Prime Minister [18th May]

The Nationalist Party complained against PBS regarding a press conference addressed by the Prime Minister and broadcast live on TVM on 18th May. The press conference was also addressed by the Deputy Prime Minister and Prof Charmaine Gauci. According to the Nationalist Party the Prime Minister addressed the press conference in a partisan manner and he spoke on controversial issues

and current policy. The Nationalist Party argued that this goes against Article 119 of the Constitution of Malta and the broadcasting legislation. The Constitution of Malta asks for a fair apportionment of time and hence the Nationalist Party was asking the Authority to provide a remedy on these grounds. The Nationalist Party said that the Prime Minister spoke about the report of the Commissioner for Standards and the constitutional reforms and not just on Covid-19 measures.

PBS pointed out that this press conference which announced the release of Covid-19 measures and thus the announcement of issues of national interest was not only broadcast by PBS but also by the other private stations include NET TV. PBS added that during this press conference the Prime Minister did not announce any economical measures and did not speak on political and controversial matters. PBS argued that in such national circumstances the Prime Minister should announce such measures and such information and this was also pointed out by the Authority in a previous decision.

Following the submissions, the Authority contended that given that this press conference was announcing national measures, hence it had to be the Prime Minister who had the competence to announce updated information and inform the public on such measures. However, the political element was the result of some questions put forward by the journalists during this press conference and hence it was only obvious that political replies by the Prime Minister had to follow. While acknowledging the fact that political comments were the results of some of the journalists' questions, the Authority saw that it was opportune to give an opportunity to the Leader of the Opposition to address the political balance. While also acknowledging that PBS did not have any control on the content of the press conference, the Authority upheld the complaint in part and ordered the Leader of the Opposition to produce a ten minute message to be aired on PBS to provide balance to the political content which was provoked by some of the journalists' question. Also the Authority reiterates that as a remedy for future and to avoid political imbalance, the journalists' questions should be broadcast on PBS as an integral part of the press conference, unless such press conferences are solely a medical update.

6.05 Imperium Europa vs PBS Ltd – TVM news 16th April and 29th May and the total exclusion of Imperium Europa in current affairs programmes.

Imperium Europa complained on the lack of coverage by PBS of a press conference by Imperium Europa and a press release which was published by the party on 16th April and subsequently on 29th May. Imperium Europa also complain on the total exclusion of their views during current affairs programmes aired on PBS.

Imperium Europa contended that the political party was being excluded from the public broadcaster. Imperium Europa argued that it issued a press release which was followed by a phone call with PBS editor and the press release was completely left out. Imperium Europa reminded that this case came after a similar case in which the station was found guilty and the Authority had decided that PBS should be pro-active and include the views of Imperium Europa. Imperium Europa argued that following the lack of reporting of the first press release, the political party sent this filmed press conference together a press release to PBS and the latter totally ignored this. Imperium Europa provided evidence to show that during current affairs programmes, Imperium Europa representatives were not included during such programmes. This goes against the Broadcasting Legislation since a political party was being left out from all coverage and current affairs programmes.

Contrary to this PBS argued that Imperium Europa was not being excluded and was reported when there were reports of public manifestations. PBS argued that the press release which the political party

is complaining about was a vlog and it treated topics which were not previously reported or referred to by TVM news. PBS argued that the themes raised in this vlog did not constitute news value.

Imperium Europa in its counter argument pointed out that the themes mentioned in the press release were the killing of Lissance Cisse and immigration which surprisingly PBS is now saying that this does not constitute news value. While understanding that an editor has his/her editorial judgement, however this editorial judgement does not mean that a political party is completely excluded from the news. Imperium Europa was also excluded from participating in current affairs programmes on TVM even during the six weeks of electoral campaign.

The Authority concluded that both the press conference held by Imperium Europa on 29th May and the press release published on 16th April were not reported on TVM news and that during the last twelve months, the views of Imperium Europa were never put forward in current affairs programmes. Also representative/s of Imperium Europa were never invited in current affairs programmes during the last 12 months.

In view of this the Authority upheld the complaint and pointed out that Imperium Europa was systematically being excluded from current affairs programmes. While it's the editor's discretion of items of news value were to be included, however, the Authority ordered PBS to report part of the press release issued by Imperium Europa on 29th May as part of TVM news bulletin. The Authority also ordered that from time PBS needs to give space to Imperium Europa and invite a representative during current affairs programmes to discuss national current themes.

6.06 PN vs PBS Ltd – Press Conference held by the Prime Minister and Finance Minister Prof Edward Scicluna and Minister for Economy, Investment and Small Businesses Silvio Schembri on 8th June 2020 and transmitted live on TVM

The Nationalist Party protested against PBS Ltd regarding a press conference which was transmitted live on PBS on 8th June 2020. This press conference was addressed by the Prime Minister Dr Robert Abela, and Finance Minister Prof Edward Scicluna and the Minister for Economy, Investment and Small Businesses Silvio Schembri. The Nationalist Party argued that this press conference lasted for more than an hour and a half and the speakers spoke on current issues and issues of political controversy.

The Nationalist Party complained that during this live press conference both Ministers were partisan in their address which was broadcast live on the public service broadcaster and hence this was in breach of Article 119 of the Constitution of Malta and the lack of adherence to the fair apportionment of time. The Nationalist Party asked to be given the same amount of airtime which can be presented in the format of a press conference. The Nationalist Party complained that this live transmission led to unbalance and went against the legal provisions of balance and impartiality because this conference treated matters of political controversy.

PBS argued that the public service broadcaster is obliged to broadcast the live press conferences as the format of such conferences consisted of information of national interest amidst the situation which was brought by the pandemic and hence the government was bound to announce certain measures but also announce incentives which were being taken specifically due to Covid-19.

PBS said that the public service broadcaster can offer a balanced and fair coverage and this was done through coverage of the Nationalist Party comments and observations on the news bulletins.

The Authority took note of all the submission but also based its decision on previous similar complaints, that is, live broadcast of press conferences. The Authority argued that in previous cases some days before, PBS also broadcast a live press conference given by the Prime Minister and argued that the political element in these press conferences were the result of questions put forward by the journalists which in some cases did not address the measures due to Covid-19 but were political questions and this created unbalance. Notwithstanding this, the Authority understands that PBS does not have any control on the content of the press conference and hence PBS could not have any control on the journalists' questions or the replies. The Authority also remarked that during the news bulletin broadcast after the press conference, TVM reported the first reactions by the Leader of the Opposition for the measures which had just been announced. The Authority found that after the press conference, the Opposition was also invited in a current affairs programmes which discussed the theme of the press conference and following this the Opposition was asked its views on the regeneration of the economy which were announced by the Government during this press conference.

In view of this the Authority upheld this complaint but felt it cannot give any remedy because the balance was reached by the immediate intervention of PBS when it broadcast the reaction of the Leader of the Opposition in the main news bulletin following the press conference. Also PBS invited Nationalist Party speakers during current affairs programmes which covered this economic regeneration programme which was announced by the Government.

As for the political comments which were the results of some questions put forward by journalists, the Authority reminded that it had already dealt with this matter in another separate complaint which was investigated and discussed in the previous week. Hence the Authority referred to the decision which was taken on 16th June and emphasized again that during press conference if these were not purely health news bulletins, the journalists' questions should not be included in the live transmission of the press conference and hence the Authority decided that the journalists' questions should not form part of the whole transmission of the press conference. The full press conference including the questions can however be aired on digital platforms or other services.

6.07 PN vs PBS Ltd – The live broadcast of ceremony of the swearing in of Dr Bernard Grech as Leader of the Opposition

The Nationalist Party complained to PBS for not transmitting the live broadcast of the ceremony of the swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition which took place on 7th October 2020. The Nationalist Party contended that during while the swearing in of the Prime Minister was transmitted extensively live on the public broadcaster, however, the ceremony swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition was only reported through a news report on the main news bulletin. The Nationalist Party argued that this goes against Article 119 of the Constituion of Malta and the public service broadcaster acted in a partial manner on the matter.

TVM argued that PBS followed the usual procedure and said in previous years the ceremony of the swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition was never broadcast live on TVM. This was was the case for instance with the swearing in of Dr Simon Busuttil and Dr Adrian Delia. PBS argued that this was not a case of lack of impartiality or lack of balance since Article 119 of the Constitutions refers to industrial and political controversy or issue of current public policy. PBS said that this was also a case of editorial discretion.

The Authority took note of the submissions and viewed TVM transmission and found that TVM did not broadcast live the swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition but TVM reported extensively the

ceremony of the swearing in and TVM did broadcast the actual swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition during the news bulletin.

The Authority concluded that TVM reported in a fair and just manner the swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition and found that TVM followed the normal previous procedures on this case. The Authority also found that TVM never reported live the ceremony of the swearing in of the Leader of the Opposition and hence PN complaint was not upheld.

The Authority obliged PBS to produce an internal protocol which serves as a guidance to the public broadcaster in the broadcasting of such events or any other swearing in ceremonies. PBS was obliged to inform the Authority of the details of such a protocol.

6.08 PN vs PBS Ltd – Press conference by the Prime Minister held on 16th October 2020 and transmitted live on TVM

In a complaint against PBS Ltd dated 19th October, the Nationalist Party protested against the live transmission of a press conference addressed by the Prime Minister on 16th October. The Nationalist Party complained that during the press conference, the Prime Minister passed a number of partisan political comments and the press conference not only focused on the Covid19 pandemic. The Nationalist Party argued that the press conference included other subject matter such as Brexit, irregular immigration and other economic measures and other subjects with controversial issues.

TVM argued that new mitigation measures were announced and such announcements fall under the responsibility of the Prime Minister. Hence the public service broadcaster is obliged to broadcast this press conference. TVM reminded that during the news bulletin broadcast on the day, PBS reported the issues raised by the Leader of the Opposition regarding Covid-19 matters.

The Authority taking into account the submission from the parties and having reviewed the press conference in question, argued that the function of the Prime Minister gives him responsibility to announce such national measures, something which was done during this press conference. The Authority argued that the political comments were minimal and the press conference was dedicated almost in full to national information and measures which the nation needed to take during this pandemic.

In view of this the Authority did not uphold the complaint of the Nationalist Party and in fact no remedy was given.

6.09 PN vs PBS Ltd – TVM News [12 November]

In a complaint against PBS Ltd., the Nationalist Party protested about two news items which were reported on TVM news broadcast on 12th November 2020. The party complained that both news items were not given its due attention on the news bulletin. One of the items reported the appointment of Dr Roberta Metsola as the Vice President of the European Parliament and another item reporting a press conference addressed by the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Bernard Grech in Gozo. The Nationalist Party complained the news item report Dr Roberta Metsola's appointment was placed as the 13th news item and the news item which reported the press conference of the Leader of the Opposition consisted of poor reporting and did not report other visits and activities which the Leader of the Opposition participated in while he was in Gozo. Citing Article 119 of the Constitution

of Malta and the provisions of Subsidiary Legislation 350.14, the Nationalist Party contended that both news items did not adhere to such provisions.

The station contended that TVM news was envisaging to produce two separate news features with regards to the appointment of Dr Roberta Metsola as Vice President of the European Parliament. In fact TVM argued that another feature was reported the next day and Dr Metsola was also invited for a TVAM programme interview the following day.

As for the second news item, TVM argued that the press conference given by Dr Bernard Grech was duly reported and noted that the press call only included this press conference and there were no other references of any other activities which the Leader of the Opposition was going to attend.

The Authority took note of all the submissions and agreed that the complaint regarding the news report on the press conference addressed by the Leader of the Opposition will not be upheld since there was lack of communication and clarity between both parties. The visits which the Leader of the Opposition held in Gozo seemed not to have been communicated to the newsroom and hence PBS could not be found guilty of this.

As per the second report on the appointment of Dr Metsola as Vice President of the European Parliament, the Authority found that the station should not be found guilty on issue of substance and content but the Authority felt that it should point out that such news items should be given its due attention and importance in the running order of the news bulletin.

7. Court cases

Digi B Network Limited vs Broadcasting Authority

Following the decision of the Court of Appeal on 16th December 2019 wherein the Court deemed the appeal by Digi B Network Ltd against the Broadcasting Authority as null and void, Digi B Network Ltd filed a Constitutional Case against the Broadcasting Authority on February 2020. Digi B Network Ltd is stating that the fundamental rights according to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights were not adhered to by the Broadcasting Authority since it declined to give any decision regarding the application of two nationwide digital radio stations.

Digi B Network Ltd also cited the provision of Article 16 (5), (6), (7), (9), (10) of the Broadcasting Act when it filed the Constitutional Case given that the Authority had not issued a formal decision on the applications and had not communicated same to the applicant.

8. Programme Monitoring Department

8.01 Audiovisual Media Services Directive Transposition

One of the most important undertakings for the Broadcasting Authority in 2020 was undoubtedly the transposition of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The transposition process of the new provisions set out in the emending Directive (EU)2018/1808 (adopted by the 28 member states in November 2018 to amend Directive 2010/13EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audio visual media services in view of changing market realities), spearheaded by the Policy Development and Programme Implementation Directorate within the office of the Prime Minister, kicked off in early February 2020. Following a series of meetings between the Directorate and the Broadcasting Authority, in which the Broadcasting Authority made a number of proposals on how to transpose and adapt the provisions in the directive to better address the local media landscape and to ensure the correct transposition of audio visual rules, on the 8th of May 2020, a draft bill amending Chapter 350 of the Laws of Malta and a draft Government Notice amending Subsidiary Legislation 350.18. were published by the Ministry within the Office of the Prime Minister (MSD) as part of a public consultation in which feedback from the general public was sought. The public consultation period lasted from the 8th to the 22nd of May 2020 and during this period, on May the 15th, a virtual info session was also organised to better explain the changes being proposed in the draft bill. During the consultation period, the Broadcasting Authority played a crucial role in providing the necessary expertise to explain the changes being proposed as well as addressing and providing solutions in respect to the feedback which poured in from various sectors.

Following the above-mentioned consultation period, the draft bill moved to parliamentary committee stage. During a total of three parliamentary committee meetings (20th July 2020, 5th August 2020, and 30th September 2020), Members of Parliament (MPs) agreed on a final text which was eventually presented for the third reading in Parliament.

In principle, a minimum harmonisation approach was taken in order not to hinder media services further in view of the continuous struggles faced by the local media industry in terms of profitability and sustainability. Thus, both Government and Opposition members agreed on the removal of the proposed provisions made by the Broadcasting Authority in the drafting process. However, the draft bill, as opposed to the emending directive, prohibits also the use of pop-up advertising during news and religious services and programmes, prohibits the inclusion of undue thematic placement, and limits advertising and sponsorship around children's programmes so that it does not include the promotion of HFSS (High Fat Sugar and Salt) products and other products which children might not be expected to consume/use or buy. Furthermore it also time bars the use of tattoo advertising in the form of product placement in line with the provisions set out in S.L.350.23 (Requirements as to Advertisements, Methods of Advertising and Directions applicable to Tattoo Advertising) In line with the need to an increased protection of minors from media content which might lead to mental, physical or moral harm, the watershed for family viewing was shifted to 21:30 and a system of content descriptors is being proposed in order to give viewers a greater degree of control in the choice of content they consume.

The Broadcasting Authority was also tasked with the drafting of a set of guidelines (Appendix 3) which clarify and better explain the spirit and interpretation of a number of provisions, focusing on those regulating commercial communications, so that media service providers get a better understanding of the new laws and ensure that as much as possible, the new framework would be equally applicable

amongst all the media services regulated by the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive. These guidelines are available on the Broadcasting Authority's website and can be found in the appendix of this annual report.

The amendments to the Broadcasting Act were published in the Government Gazette of the 7th of December 2020 and the transposition process was finalised a few days later with the publication of four legal notices amending the relative Subsidiary Legislation under the Broadcasting Act.

8.02 Thematic Reports

Although the focus of the Monitoring Department is the regulatory aspect of television and radio services licensed by the Authority, through the year, the department also compiles several thematic reports which focus on specific issues. These reports provide an in-depth analysis of trends and developments in the broadcasting sector and are at the basis of the risk assessments done in relation to monitoring priorities.

In 2020, two community radio stations had their license extended for a further three-year term. Unfortunately, since much of these community radio channels are mainly run by NGOs, and henceforth non-profitable, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of these radio stations either had to limit their services or even temporarily cease broadcasting.

For the monitoring department, 2020 was a year in which there was a significant increase in the number of complaints warranting investigation. In line with previous trends, these complaints were mainly related to the issue of impartiality consequentially resulting in unfairness for the complainant. In real terms, the monitoring department investigated 19 complaints. In 9 of these complaints, the Broadcasting Authority was requested to deliver a formal decision.

1. Rapport dwar il-Programm Televiziv Propjetà Malta
2. Rapport dwar it-Tražmissjoni ta' Radju Għażziela
3. Rapport dwar it-Tražmissjoni ta' Radju San Filep
4. Rapport dwar it-Tražmissjoni ta' Radju Calypso
5. Rapport dwar it-Tražmissjoni ta' Smash Politika
6. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Xtra (April – Mejju 2020)
7. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Insights (April – Mejju 2020)
8. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Xarabank (April – Mejju 2020)
9. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Realtà (April – Mejju 2020)
10. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Ras Imb Ras (April – Mejju 2020)
11. Rapport dwar il-Parteċipazzjoni fil-Programm Dissett (April – Mejju 2020)
12. Rapport dwar l-Iskeda Ottubru 2020 tal-PBS

9. ICT and Projects Department

August 2020 marked the start of the ICT and Projects department at the Malta Broadcasting Authority. This department is tasked to develop the authority's technical strategy and oversee its implementation for its administration at Hamrun, and its technical operations at Għargħur transmission centre. This department will also manage all major projects commissioned by the authority moving forward.

Most of the remaining months of 2020 were spent discussing where the authority should be in the coming years and setting out a roadmap for each of these upcoming projects. Some projects have already started and below is a summary of these works, which will continue into 2021.

9.01 Għargħur Transmission Centre - Electrical Systems Upgrade

The electrical systems at the Authority's Għargħur Transmission centre were long due for an upgrade, which will include a new electrical backup generator interconnected with Enemalta's own power supply systems. The upgrade project will also provide for a series of new power transfer switches and electrical distribution to the various transmission rooms in use at the centre. This project will ensure that the transmission systems in use at the Għargħur centre, serving the whole of Malta and Gozo, remain resilient in case of mains power failure at the site.



Għargħur Transmission Centre - Health, Safety and Security study and recommendations

During 2020, the Authority commissioned security consulting firm Shield to review and recommend improvements for the operations at the Għargħur transmission centre, from a Health, Safety and Security perspective. The scope of this exercise was comprehensive, covering both works on the transmission tower and the adjacent building facilities. Shield provided various recommendations by way of reports and consultation meetings, which led to various initiatives starting at the site, including brand new signage in use at the Għargħur centre and the groundwork for new systems to be deployed at the centre for improved security and worker protection at the site. Shield also facilitated onsite meetings with the Civil Protection and the Accident & Emergency departments to ensure all parties will be aligned on the measures to take in case of an emergency is triggered on site, through a series of Standard Operating Procedures for all parties to follow in such a case.

9.02 Għargħur Transmission Centre - Facilities Upgrade – Security guard compound

In its quest to modernise its building facilities at the Għargħur Transmission Centre, the Authority has commissioned its architects to redesign the security compound at Għargħur ready to be kitted with latest security systems & first-aid facilities. The designs for the compound have been finalised and the plans have been submitted to the relevant authorities for approval with the intention of having these works completed throughout 2021.

9.03 Għargħur Transmission Centre – Tower structural survey

The Broadcasting Authority owns and operates the Għargħur transmission tower hosting multiple operations for Radio, TV and Telephony purposes covering the whole Maltese territory. The iron structure, built in the 1960s with some adaptations along the years, is now showing clear signs of ageing, which require urgent attention. In recognising this, the Authority has commissioned QP Management Ltd. to provide it with a detailed study of the towering structure and to guide it on the next steps for a thorough maintenance required throughout 2021. A team of experts have carried out their investigation throughout November 2020, and a report with findings and next steps is due to be presented to the Authority in January 2021.



9.04 Għargħur Transmission Centre – Master antenna cables replacement

The Broadcasting Authority operates the national FM radio antennas, hosted on the Għargħur tower. As part of the ongoing maintenance required at the Għargħur centre, the two feeder cables supplying the main antenna system will be replaced with new ones in the early months of 2021.



9.05 Hamrun Office – Facilities Upgrade – Façade & Air-conditioning systems

The authority is starting a series of projects required to maintain and modernise its office facilities in Hamrun. One of the first projects involves substantial maintenance work on the masonry and brickwork of the four facades of the office block, primarily required to stop water/humidity ingress into the offices. The apertures will also be replaced with more modern and energy-efficient fixtures. This project has already been through a project tendering process and has been adjudicated and awarded. Project implementation works are due to commence in April 2021 and should be complete over the summer period.



10. International Relations

European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA)

Despite being possibly the smallest audio visual media services regulator in the EU, the Broadcasting Authority is a full member of the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA). Whilst providing the European Commission with the necessary expertise in the field of audio visual services, ERGA serves as a platform for cooperation between national regulatory Authorities (NRAs) in the EU. This cooperation is becoming ever more important with the continuously growing presence and significance of cross border services targeting audiences both on a European level as well as globally.

At the 14th ERGA Plenary, which was held on 3rd December 2020, members adopted the ERGA Work Programme 2021. The 2021 work programme will focus on;

- (i) Consistent implementation and enforcement of the new AVMSD framework disinformation
- (ii) Completion of the EU regulatory framework relevant for media
- (iii) Disinformation

In view of this year's work programme the Authority again committed itself to participate in all three sub-groups. Furthermore, following this year's signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for enhanced cooperation between NRAs, the Authority will also be participating in ERGA's Action Group 1 which will be tasked with the supervision of an effective cooperation in line with the principles and objectives set out in the MoU in order to ensure a consistent and effective implementation of the revised Directive. The MoU will also set out a framework for collaboration and information exchange between NRAs in practical issues arising from the implementation of the Revised Directive. Thus it is imperative that the Authority keeps abreast with the latest developments in this dynamic sector.

Other working groups which the Authority participated in as part of the ERGA sub groups were a sub group on the regulation of vloggers on video sharing platform. This was brought over by the AVMS Directive which brought in regulations of new services particularly with regulation of video sharing platforms.

Another subgroup dealt on disinformation and dealing with fake news and a report on notions of disinformation and strengthening factchecking across the European Union was compiled by ERGA members. Furthermore ERGA also believes that media literacy is a tool in combating disinformation, hence a report on improving media literacy campaigns on disinformation was compiled and adopted. Empowerment on media users is also an essential element in disinformation and ERGA prepared a report on how to improve procedures adopted by Code of Practice Signatories as regards consumers complaints and flagging.

The Broadcasting Authority during the year in review participated in working groups which discussed ERGA's position on European Democracy Action Plan and the Digital Services Act.

Mediterranean Network Regulatory Authorities – Media Literacy working group

Apart from the European fora, the Broadcasting Authority is also a member of the Mediterranean Network Regulatory Authorities.

On December 17th, the Broadcasting Authority participated in a working group held by the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities in which members were presented by the results of two studies; Gender-Based Violence in the Media, carried out in March-May 2018 and Media Literacy in the MNRA which was carried out in 2019.

The Gender-Based Violence in the Media study shows that the majority of the monitored stations channels place between 20%-40% of news items about gender-based violence in the headline section. It was stated that the monitored/observed news items about gender-based violence gave prominence to reflection and social awareness, portrayed specific cases (as assaults and legal procedures) and reported actions by political actors in society. The study highlights that sensationalisation of news items about gender-based violence was very evident by using visual and language elements which included personal information about persons involved. The study recommends to:

- Inform and raise awareness that combating gender violence is an issue of general interest and human rights.;
- Portray Gender-based violence is a problem for society at large;
- Media shall respect the dignity and the right to privacy of victims and their children;
- Exclude sensationalism, drama and morbidity from the form and content of information on gender violence;
- Avoid suggesting a cause-effect relationship between the facts and the origin, socio-cultural situations and/or personal circumstances of the people involved;
- Help to shed light on the consequences of gender violence;
- Provide contact details for victim support and prevention services; and
- Journalist and the media to draw up, monitor and/or update their codes of ethics and training of communications professionals.

The Media Literacy in the MNRA study was carried out among 13 working group members to enlist and give a brief about the media literacy initiatives and projects that were performed in each country among various cohorts of society.

11. Audience Research

11.1 Radio and Television Audience Assessment

In accordance with Article 30(2) of the Broadcasting Act, Cap. 350 of the Laws of Malta, the Broadcasting Authority commissioned the National Statistics Office (N.S.O.) to compile data on Audiences. As in previous years the N.S.O. selected the sample and administered the data collection by means of telephone interviews which was then forwarded to the Authority for analysis and publication of assessments.

Respondents were asked about their listenership and viewership choices: what station/s they had followed the previous day of the interview; what reception platforms were used; what programme genres were followed on television; how often they usually listened to radio; and what type of radio programmes were normally followed.

Data was collected daily (40 interviews) during March, and July. March was a time when the first steps to combat the Corona Virus pandemic were being taken. People coming from abroad were asked to self-quarantine for 14 days [1st March 2020] and those with symptoms who had returned from affected countries were to call their doctor or the COVID-19 helpline and were advised to refrain from visiting doctors' clinics, health centres or the casualty department in the first instance. [2nd March]. The first case was reported on 7th March, from 13th March all schools (primary, secondary, post-secondary and tertiary) and childcare centres were closed, and by 20th March all passenger flights inbound to Malta were suspended.

During June COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. As from 5 June all establishments were allowed to reopen subject to the implementation of establishment/ sector-specific health risks mitigation measures mainly related to hygiene, mask wearing and physical distance practices. The airport reopened on 1 July for flights to/from 'safe corridor' territories. People coming from abroad were asked to self-quarantine for 14 days [1st March 2020] and those with symptoms who had returned from certain countries were to call their doctor or the COVID-19 helpline and were advised to refrain from visiting doctors' clinics, health centres or the casualty department in the first instance.

These and similar measures have affected daily routines and although at first these were thought to be temporary such measures have been extended following the second COVID-19 wave.

The stratified sample based on national demographics represents all those aged 12 years and over who are living in households. The eldest persons contacted were not housed in any retreat home/s. Those selected persons who had been transferred to any home for the elderly were not contacted at their respective homes and were listed as ineligible. The number of persons who refused to participate was always minimal and well within limits – 6.9% and 7.8%.

Population, Sample, Response Rate, and Margin of Error

		<u>Mar 2020</u>	<u>July 2020</u>
Population (12 years plus)	[N]	451,358	452,887
Sample	[n]	1,240	1,240
Response Rate	[%]	29.29%	38.92%
Margin of error (95% confidence)	[±]	2.72%	2.71%
Youngest person contacted		12 yrs	12 yrs
Eldest person contacted		93 yrs	92 yrs
No. of Ineligible persons		55	44
Refusals - No./%		215/6.9%	250/7.8%

For radio respondents were asked the following:

- how often do they listen to radio during a typical week – every day and/or nearly every day, at least once a week up to 4 times a week, and/or never;
- which station was followed the previous day and for how long – giving the opportunity of identifying three radio stations and three time periods for each station named;
- which programme is usually followed – either naming a specific programme or naming a programme genre; and
- whether or not they have a DAB+ radio-set and whether this is used to listen to local stations only, foreign stations only, or both local and foreign stations

For television, respondents were also given the possibility of identifying three television stations that they had followed the previous day and they could identify three different periods for each station that was followed. The participants were also asked what type of service they use to follow television and what types of programmes they like to follow on local television stations.

COVID-19 Effects on Radio Listening and TV Viewing

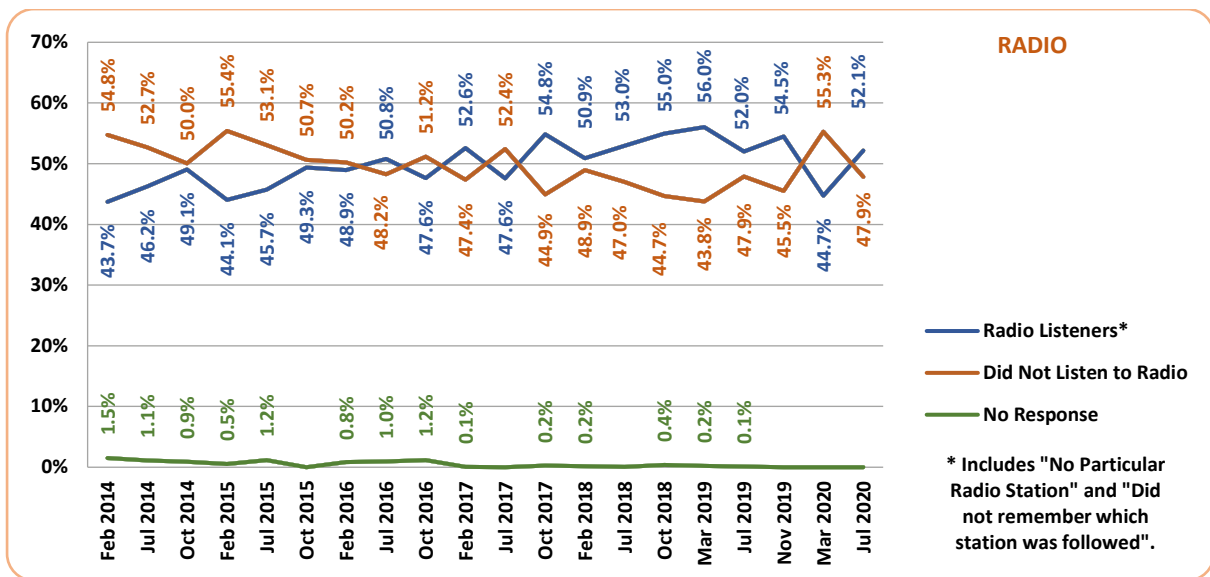
In **Radio** March 2020 had the third lowest level of radio audiences reached [at 44.7%] since February 2014 [43.7%] when data started being collected for three separate months of the broadcasting season; and it was the first time that there was such a high decrease of listeners when compared to the previous assessment period [November 2019: -9.7%] and with a previous similar period [March 2019: -11.3%]. It was also one of the fewest assessments in which there was not even one respondent who did not want to state whether he had followed radio or not [No Response = 0%].

By July [at 52.1%] audiences bounced back to their previous levels - there was a 7.4% increase of radio listeners over the previous assessment period of March 2020 [44.7%] and a minimal increase of 0.1% over that of a similar period last year [July 2019; 52.0%].

Radio Listeners

	Radio Listeners*	Did Not Listen to Radio	No Response	±% Listeners/ Non-List.	±% Listeners/ Prev. Qtr.
Feb 2014	43.7%	54.8%	1.5%	-11.0%	
Jul 2014	46.2%	52.7%	1.1%	-6.4%	2.5%
Oct 2014	49.1%	50.0%	0.9%	-1.0%	2.8%
Feb 2015	44.1%	55.4%	0.5%	-11.3%	-5.0%
Jul 2015	45.7%	53.1%	1.2%	-7.3%	1.7%
Oct 2015	49.3%	50.7%	0.0%	-1.3%	3.6%
Feb 2016	48.9%	50.2%	0.8%	-1.3%	-0.4%
Jul 2016	50.8%	48.2%	1.0%	2.5%	1.8%
Oct 2016	47.6%	51.2%	1.2%	-3.5%	-3.1%
Feb 2017	52.6%	47.4%	0.1%	5.2%	4.9%
Jul 2017	47.6%	52.4%	0.0%	-4.8%	-5.0%
Oct 2017	54.8%	44.9%	0.2%	9.9%	7.2%
Feb 2018	50.9%	48.9%	0.2%	2.0%	-3.9%
Jul 2018	53.0%	47.0%	0.0%	6.0%	2.1%
Oct 2018	55.0%	44.7%	0.4%	10.3%	2.0%
Mar 2019	56.0%	43.8%	0.2%	12.2%	1.1%
Jul 2019	52.0%	47.9%	0.1%	4.2%	-4.0%
Nov 2019	54.5%	45.5%	0.0%	8.9%	2.4%
Mar 2020	44.7%	55.3%	0.0%	-10.5%	-9.7%
Jul 2020	52.1%	47.9%	0.0%	4.3%	7.4%

* Includes "No Particular Radio Station" and "Did not remember which station".



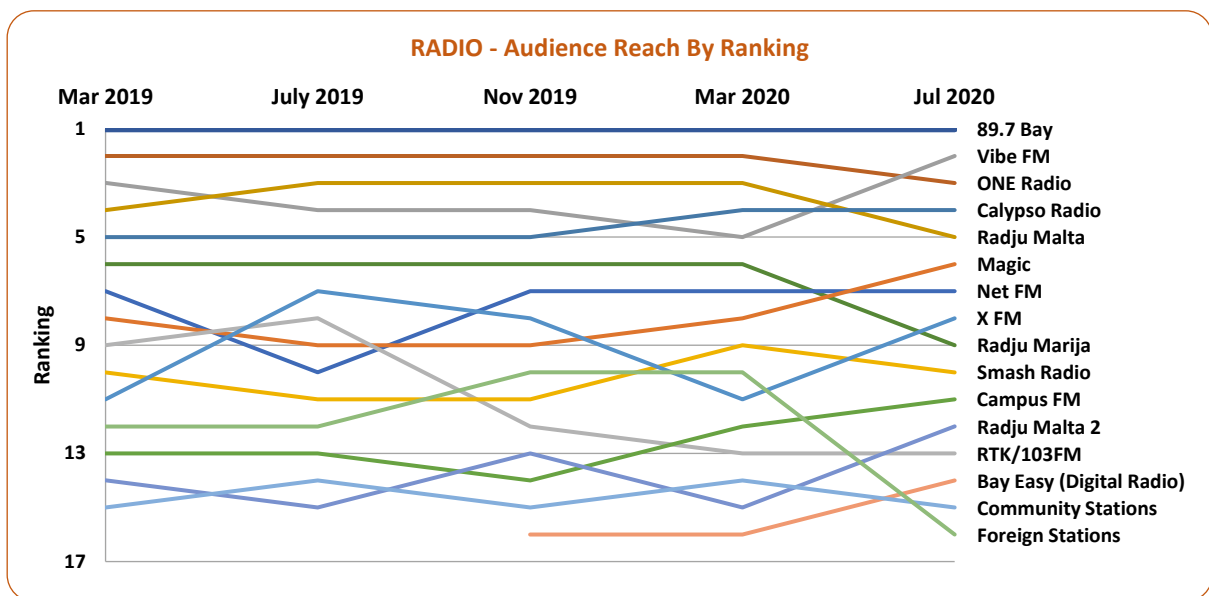
When radio audiences were analysed by broadcasting station more effects of COVID-10 restrictions became evident - taking just the rankings of the individual stations there were various significant audience shifts amongst the stations. From the top five radio stations only 89.7 Bay maintained its prime position since March 2019 while ONE Radio maintained its second place position until March 2020 when Vibe FM ranked second and ONE Radio ranked third. Of note is Vibe FM which rose to the second most followed station in July 2020 from the fifth position in March 2020.

Those stations which usually feature more music programmes have performed far better than those stations that broadcast a wider spectrum of programmes. Besides Vibe FM, this was true for Calypso Radio, Magic Malta, XFM, and Radju Malta 2. On the other hand there were dramatic declines for Radju Malta [from 3rd in March 2020 to 5th in June 2020], Radju Marija [from 6th to 9th] and 103FM [from 8th in July 2019 to 13th in July 2020].

Radio Listeners by Station

	Mar2019			July2019			Nov2019			Mar2020			Jul2020		
	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up
89.7 Bay	23.83	1	60,000	25.92	1	64,000	20.78	1	50,000	20.41	1	43,000	22.75	1	54,000
ONE Radio	15.81	2	40,000	16.47	2	41,000	16.38	2	39,000	19.80	2	41,000	14.73	3	35,000
Vibe FM	12.64	3	32,000	9.92	4	25,000	12.48	4	30,000	7.87	5	17,000	15.50	2	37,000
Radju Malta	9.57	4	24,000	11.61	3	29,000	12.84	3	31,000	12.50	3	26,000	9.00	5	22,000
Calypso Radio	8.72	5	22,000	7.85	5	20,000	10.27	5	25,000	12.27	4	26,000	12.53	4	30,000
Radju Marija	5.21	6	14,000	5.62	6	14,000	6.94	6	17,000	5.94	6	13,000	3.34	9	8,000
Net FM	4.87	7	13,000	3.81	10	10,000	3.79	7	9,000	5.32	7	11,000	4.50	7	11,000

Magic	4.85	8	13,000	3.81	9	10,000	3.10	9	8,000	3.67	8	8,000	5.30	6	13,000
RTK/103FM	3.69	9	10,000	4.14	8	11,000	2.32	12	6,000	1.32	13	3,000	0.62	13	2,000
Smash Radio	3.32	10	9,000	2.41	11	6,000	2.60	11	7,000	2.65	9	6,000	1.87	10	5,000
X FM	2.42	11	7,000	4.38	7	11,000	3.15	8	8,000	1.87	11	4,000	3.66	8	9,000
Campus FM	1.28	13	4,000	0.94	13	3,000	0.66	14	2,000	1.56	12	4,000	1.13	11	3,000
Radju Malta 2	0.94	14	3,000	0.36	15	1,000	1.11	13	3,000	0.73	15	2,000	0.65	12	2,000
Bay Easy (Digital Radio)							0.22	16	1,000	0.57	16	2,000	0.22	14	1,000
All Rock (Dig)										0.20	17	1,000			
BKR National (Dig)										0.13	18	1,000			
Community Stations	0.54	15	2,000	0.60	14	2,000	0.51	15	2,000	0.75	14	2,000	0.99	15	3,000
Foreign Stations	2.30	12	6,000	2.16	12	6,000	2.84	10	7,000	2.44	10	6,000	3.20	16	8,000
	<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>		



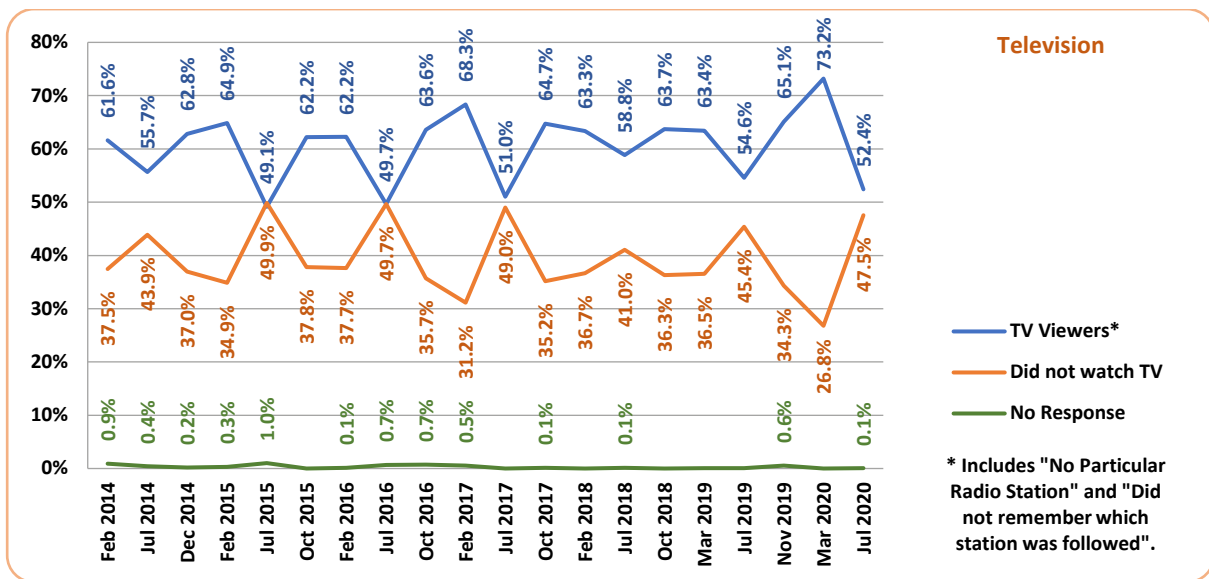
In **television** March 2020 was the first time that such a level of television audiences was reached - since February 2014 [when data collection methods were last changed]. We have registered the highest percentage of viewers who had watched one or more stations (up to three station) and who could identify the station and the time spent with each station [68.9%, plus]; the lowest percentage of consumers who categorically stated that they did not watch television the day before the interview [26.5% plus 0.3% who stated that they do not have a TV-set]; and it was one of the fewest assessments in which there was not even one respondent who did not want to state whether he had watched television or not [No Response = 0%].

TV Viewers

	TV Viewers*	Did not watch TV	No Response	±% Viewers/ Non-View.	±% Viewers/ Prev. Qtr.
Feb 2014	61.6%	37.5%	0.9%	24.2%	
Jul 2014	55.7%	43.9%	0.4%	11.8%	-5.9%
Dec 2014	62.8%	37.0%	0.2%	25.9%	7.2%
Feb 2015	64.9%	34.9%	0.3%	30.0%	2.0%
Jul 2015	49.1%	49.9%	1.0%	-0.7%	-15.7%
Oct 2015	62.2%	37.8%	0.0%	24.4%	13.1%
Feb 2016	62.2%	37.7%	0.1%	24.6%	0.1%
Jul 2016	49.7%	49.7%	0.7%	0.0%	-12.6%
Oct 2016	63.6%	35.7%	0.7%	27.9%	13.9%
Feb 2017	68.3%	31.2%	0.5%	37.2%	4.8%
Jul 2017	51.0%	49.0%	0.0%	2.0%	-17.3%
Oct 2017	64.7%	35.2%	0.1%	29.6%	13.7%
Feb 2018	63.3%	36.7%	0.0%	26.7%	-1.4%
Jul 2018	58.8%	41.0%	0.1%	17.8%	-4.5%
Oct 2018	63.7%	36.3%	0.0%	27.4%	4.9%
Mar 2019	63.4%	36.5%	0.0%	26.9%	-0.3%
Jul 2019	54.6%	45.4%	0.0%	9.2%	-8.9%
Nov 2019	65.1%	34.3%	0.6%	30.8%	10.5%
Mar 2020	73.2%	26.8%	0.0%	46.4%	8.1%
Jul 2020	52.4%	47.5%	0.1%	4.9%	-20.8%

* Includes "No Particular Radio Station" and "Did not remember which station".

In July 2020 audience returned to their previous levels before the outbreak of COVID-19. During this month the majority of the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and TV audiences were slightly less than those registered during a similar period last year [July 2019: 54.6%; July 2020: 52.4%] but were not the lowest registered [July 2015: 49.1%].

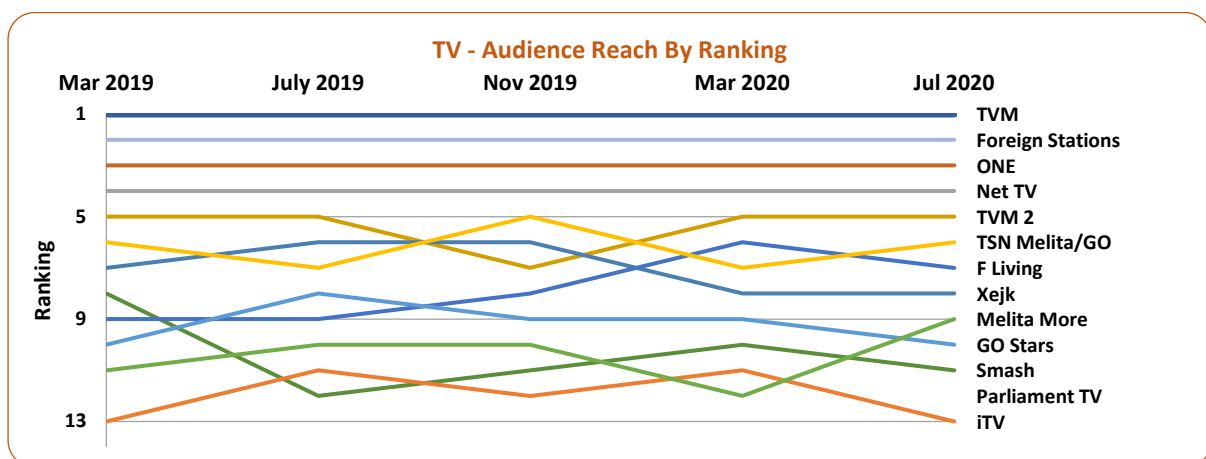


When audiences were analysed by station there were some noticeable changes. During March 2020 there was a stark increase in the number of audiences attracted by local television stations. Of note is TVM2 which increased its audiences by 425% from 4,000 [November 2019] to 21,000 [March 2020] and exceeding the amount of audiences attained during the same period last year [March 2019] by 4,000. Overall, the main three local stations [TVM, ONE, and Net TV] maintained their audiences and rankings with TVM increasing its audiences by 51.45% over the previous assessment of November 2019 [deemed as the start of the broadcasting season] from 138,000 viewers to 209,000, ONE by 10%, and Net TV by 18.75%. Some changes to broadcasting schedules were also made and approved by the Broadcasting Authority.

During July audiences returned to their normal levels as in previous assessments with similar/same rankings. However, changes in rankings were noticeable in local stations broadcasting foreign content such as TSN Melita/GO, Melita More, and GO Stars.

TV Viewers by Station

	Mar2019			July2019			Nov2019			Mar2020			Jul2020		
	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up	%	Ranking	Rounding up
TVM	33.35	1	143,000	33.90	1	120,000	34.79	1	138,000	41.41	1	209,000	31.74	1	102,000
ONE	18.41	3	79,000	17.90	3	63,000	20.12	3	80,000	17.32	3	88,000	18.91	3	61,000
Net TV	7.88	4	34,000	10.09	4	36,000	7.96	4	32,000	7.46	4	38,000	6.79	4	22,000
TVM 2	3.94	5	17,000	2.07	5	8,000	0.87	7	4,000	4.12	5	21,000	3.88	5	13,000
Xejk	0.98	7	5,000	1.86	6	7,000	1.00	6	4,000	0.79	8	4,000	1.14	8	4,000
Smash	0.35	8	2,000	0.06	12	1,000	0.36	11	2,000	0.53	10	3,000	0.35	11	2,000
F Living	0.30	9	2,000	0.57	9	3,000	0.60	8	3,000	1.01	6	6,000	1.93	7	7,000
iTV	0.07	13	1,000	0.12	11	1,000	0.33	12	2,000	0.23	11	2,000	0.10	13	1,000
Parliament TV	0.08	12	1,000										0.19	12	1,000
	<u>65.36</u>			<u>66.57</u>			<u>66.02</u>			<u>72.87</u>			<u>65.03</u>		
TSN Melita/GO	2.05	6	9,000	0.77	7	3,000	2.22	5	9,000	0.94	7	5,000	3.14	6	10,000
GO Stars	0.28	10	2,000	0.69	8	3,000	0.50	9	2,000	0.55	9	3,000	0.52	10	2,000
Melita More	0.14	11	1,000	0.15	10	1,000	0.40	10	2,000	0.18	12	1,000	0.72	9	3,000
Foreign Stations	32.16	2	138,000	31.83	2	112,000	30.87	2	122,000	25.47	2	129,000	30.60	2	98,000
	<u>34.64</u>			<u>33.43</u>			<u>33.98</u>			<u>27.13</u>			<u>34.97</u>		
	<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>			<u>100%</u>		



In previous assessments it was repeatedly reported that generally the viewing of local stations was the highest with those over the age of 50 years while the viewing of foreign stations was higher with those from 12 to 50 years old. For the assessment of March 2020 viewing patterns had changed – the

viewing of local stations was the highest with all the age groups and in all the districts. The viewing of local stations of 12-20 year olds increased by 27.54% from 49.95% in November 2019 to 77.49% in March 2020 and were 10.63% higher than that registered in a similar period the previous year [March 2019: 66.86%]. This was throughout the demographical classes of the assessment – by gender by age groups and by districts.

For July 2020 there was a shift to previous patterns as those of July 2019.

Audience Reach by TV Station														
	Total %	Gender		Age Group					District					
		Males	Females	12-20	21-30	31-50	51-70	71+	South Harbour	North Harbour	South Eastern	Western District	Northern District	Gozo & Comino
March 2019														
Local Stations	65.36	60.40	70.10	66.86	67.70	58.05	65.86	71.58	70.77	62.66	67.54	62.47	64.35	66.24
Foreign Stations	34.64	39.60	29.90	33.14	32.30	41.95	34.14	28.42	29.23	37.34	32.46	37.53	35.65	33.76
July 2019														
Local Stations	66.57	67.82	65.20	48.56	66.25	59.31	71.07	74.93	64.87	64.91	68.38	68.73	70.45	60.50
Foreign Stations	33.43	32.18	34.80	51.44	33.75	40.69	28.93	25.07	35.13	35.09	31.62	31.27	29.55	39.50
November 2019														
Local Stations	66.02	60.17	71.88	49.95	66.98	62.48	72.38	69.38	63.12	62.13	77.00	75.24	62.95	63.07
Foreign Stations	33.98	39.83	28.12	50.05	33.02	37.52	27.62	30.62	36.88	37.87	23.00	24.76	37.05	36.93
March 2020														
Local Stations	72.87	71.27	74.32	77.49	70.64	65.03	74.49	80.95	75.25	71.81	73.46	72.86	70.04	78.43
Foreign Stations	27.13	28.73	25.68	22.51	29.36	34.97	25.51	19.05	24.75	28.19	26.54	27.14	29.96	21.57
July 2020														
Local Stations	65.03	58.45	71.36	43.60	52.96	55.16	69.39	78.22	68.29	63.95	65.06	76.31	51.12	75.56
Foreign Stations	34.97	41.55	28.64	56.40	47.04	44.84	30.61	21.78	31.71	36.05	34.94	23.69	48.88	24.44

As a concluding remark people were more prone to watching television than to listening to radio at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic [March 2020]. However, viewing and listening patterns returned to normal previously registered benchmarks.

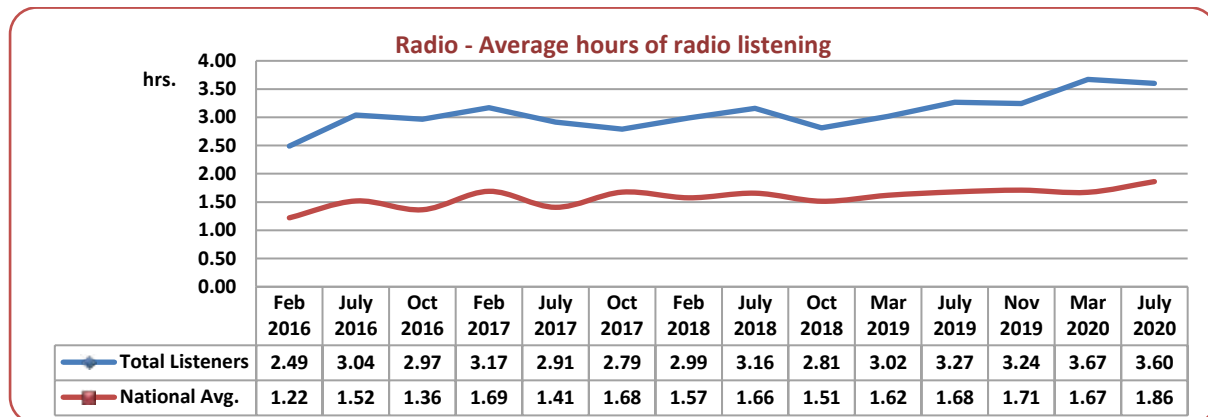
How long did radio listeners tune in and how much time did TV viewers spend watching television?

Taking all the audiences (i.e. the number of listeners and the amount of time spent) for all the weekdays, the average amount spent by radio listeners tuning in to their favourite station as well as TV viewers watching their TV-sets was calculated not only over all the audiences but also for each radio and television station. And taking the total audiences and dividing that by the whole population a national average for radio listening and TV viewing were calculated.

For **Radio**, although there was a decrease of 9.7% in the amount of radio listeners during March 2020 [44.4%] over the previous assessment period of November 2019 [54.5%] and a decrease of 11.3% over a similar period [March 2019: 56.0%], radio listeners spent more time listening to radio at 3.67hrs which was the highest ever registered since February 2016. And although in July radio audiences bounced back to their pre-COVID-19 levels a high degree of radio listening was maintain – the second highest ever recorded at 3.6hrs.

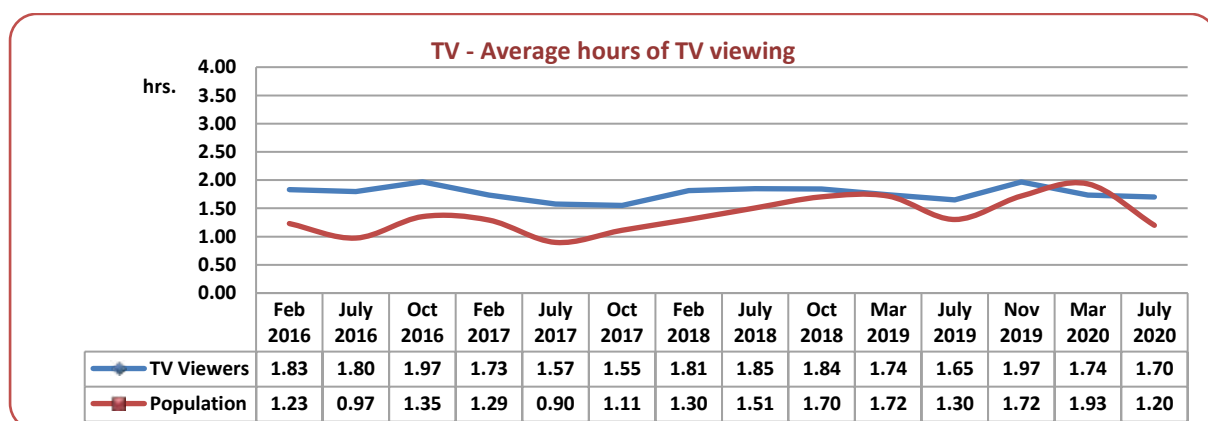
On a national level the high decrease in audience numbers during March 2020 is reflected in a lower national average [1.67hrs] compared to the previous assessment of November 2019 [1.71hrs] and that of a similar period March 2019 [1.62hrs]. During July as audience numbers increased listeners still

maintained their habits registering the highest even national average of 1.86hrs. The increase in the number of audiences in July is attributed to the fact that as soon as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted listening habits nurtured during March 2020 were also retained as listeners increased their movements.



For **television** there was a different scenario. At the start of the COVID-19 restriction in March 2020 there was an unprecedented increase in the number of television viewers and the majority of these were not regular viewers. In fact During March 2019 the average number of hours of all TV viewers [1.74hrs] was 13'48" minutes less than that registered at the previous assessment in November 2019 [1.97hrs] but at the same level as that registered in March 2019 [1.74hrs]. And when in July 2020 audiences returned to their previous levels the average number of hours [1.70hrs] was 2'24" minutes less than that registered at the previous assessment in March 2020 [1.74hrs] but was 3'00" more than that registered the previous year during July 2019 [1.65hrs].

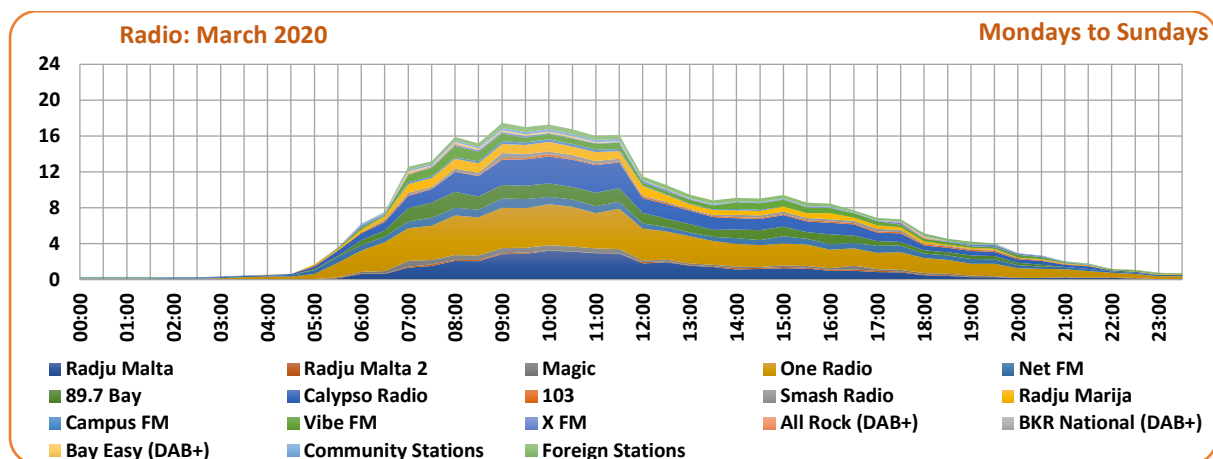
Over the whole of the population aged 12 years and over, average viewing during March 2020 [1.93hrs] was 12'36" higher than at the previous assessment of November 2019 [1.72hrs] and 12'36" higher than that registered for the same period last year [March 2019, 1.72hrs]. And for July 2020 [1.20hrs] this was 43'48" less than at the previous assessment of March 2020 [1.93hrs] and 6'00" lower than that registered for the same period last year [July 2019, 1.30hrs].



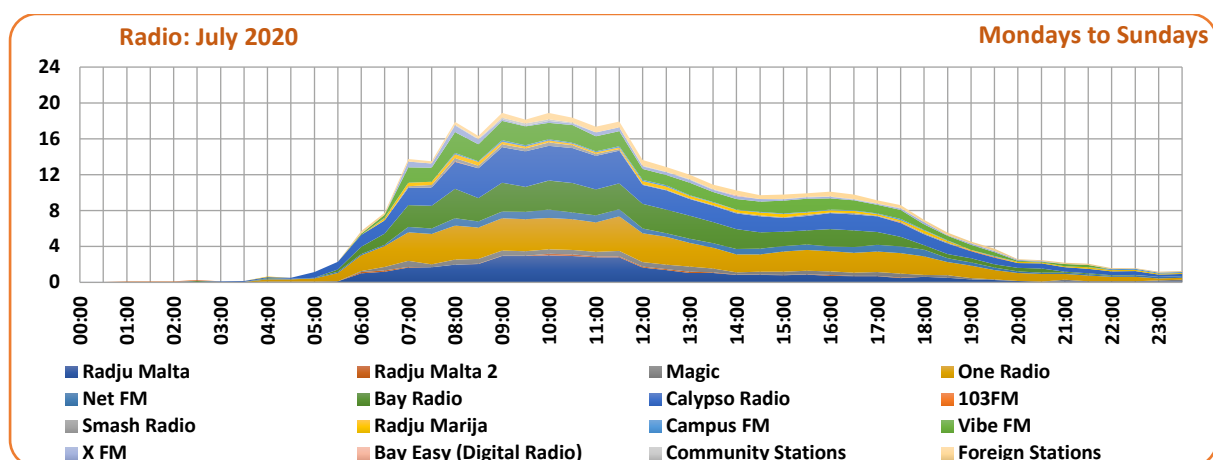
Restrictive movements led to a rise in the consumption of television. More people have watched television during March 2020 leading to the highest ever registered national average of 1.93hrs. but the average over all the viewers only was less.

Differences in Listening and Viewing patterns

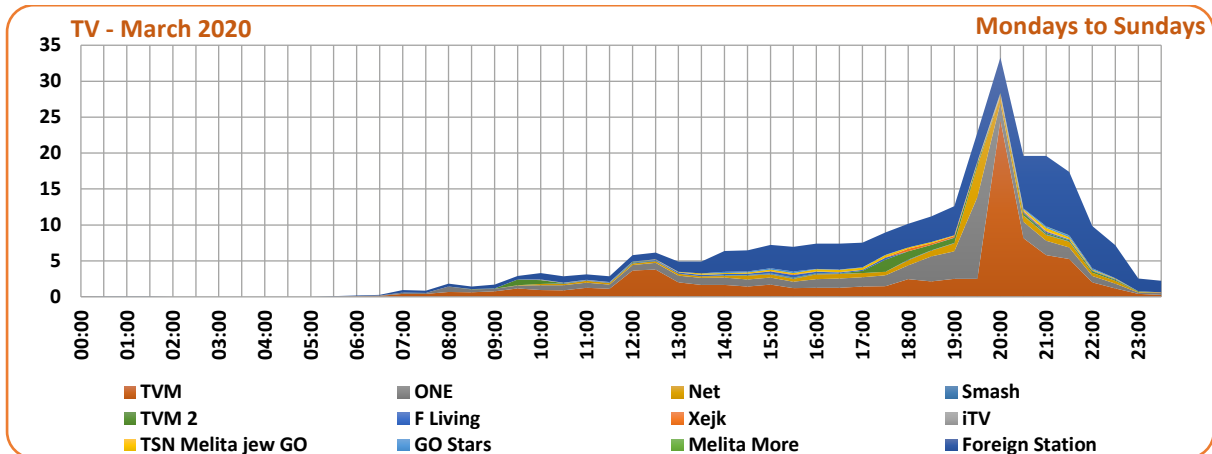
For **Radio** there is clear evidence that radio listening patterns have changed during March 2020. In previous assessments, audiences rose sharply between 7:00 and 8:00, falling between 8:30 and 9:00, only to reach the highest peak at 10:00. During March 2020 the highest peak was reached earlier at 9:00 and was sustained till 11:30. Besides, the reduction in audiences during the afternoon and evening broadcasts was much more at a steady rate than in previous assessments. However night-time audiences were half of those attained in previous assessments.



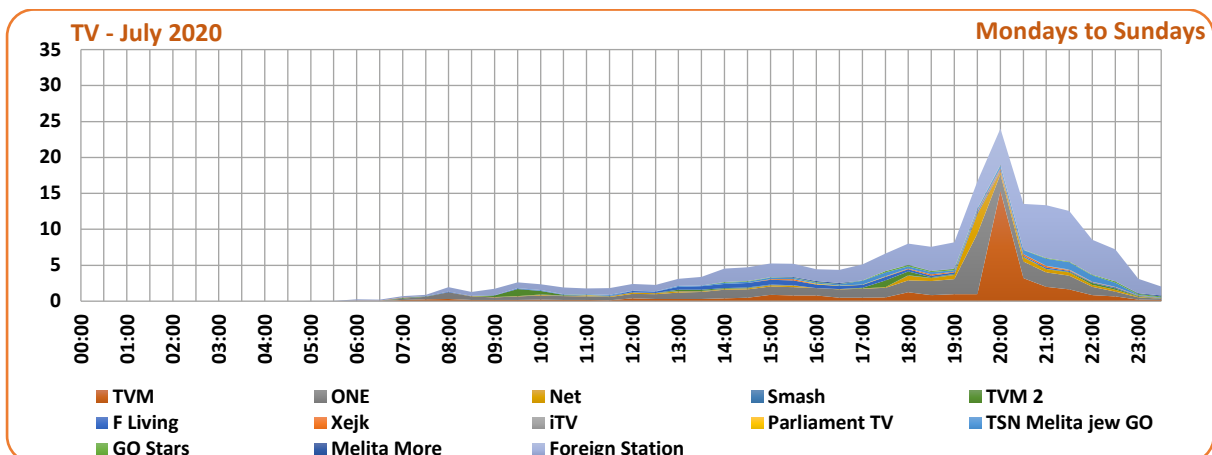
This trend has continued on during July 2020 especially with peaking at 4:00pm and the slow reduction of audiences till 5:30pm.



Similarly, for **Television**, there is clear evidence that TV viewing patterns have changed. While in previous assessments audiences rose steadily throughout the day, during March 2020 there was a marked increase in audiences from those at mid-morning to those at noon – in November 2019 average morning audiences amounted to approximately 12,800 while during March 2020 audiences were a clear 30% more. Daily broadcasts of COVID-19 Updates have increased audiences by more than twice [230%; ≈40,000] the levels of those in November 2019 [≈17,400]. Prime-time for local stations was clearly at 8:00pm and used to extend until 10:30pm. Prime-time for foreign stations started at 9:00pm and exceeded that of local stations.



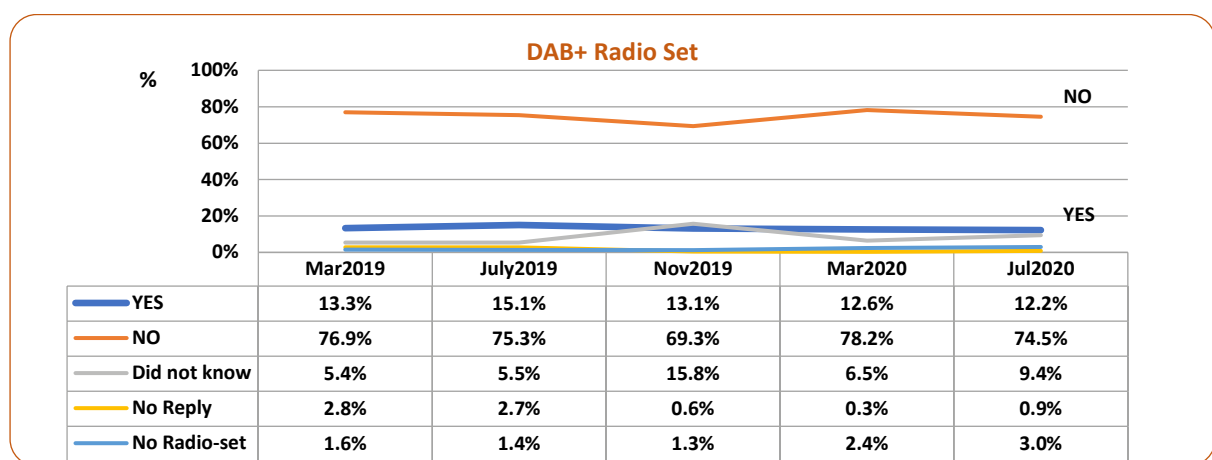
During July 2020, Audiences returned to previous assessment analyses. Throughout the day audiences started picking up slowly at 8:00am with 1.932% [≈10,800], peaked to 2.643% [≈14,800] at 9:30am, but were less than 2% until noon with an average of 1.932% [≈10,800] between 8:00am and noon. Audiences started rising gradually after noon peaking to 5.247% at 3:00pm [≈29,300]; falling slightly and peaking up again at 6:00pm at 8.018% [≈44,900]. Audiences sharply peaked at 8:00pm at 24.014% [≈135,000] and sharply falling to 13.533% [≈76,000] at 8:30pm. Audiences were then maintained at this level during prime time programmes falling sharply to 8.535% [≈47,800] at 10:00pm and to 2.021% [≈11,400] at midnight.



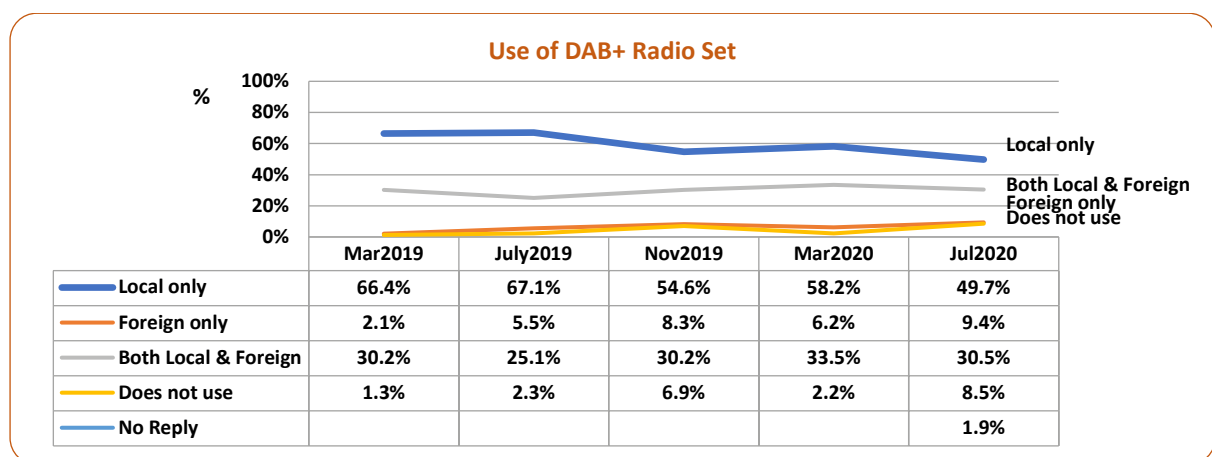
What type of reception services were used?

For **Radio** respondents were asked whether they have a *DAB+* radio-set to listen to radio; and, if they do have a *Dab+* radio-set, what type of content do they listen to – local content only; foreign content only; and both local as well as foreign content.

In both instances there was little change from those registered the previous year: in July 2020 only 12.2% stated that they have a *DAB+* radio-set; 9.4% of the respondents did not know what kind of radio-set they use to listen to radio stations; as much as 74.5% of the population replied that they do not have a *DAB+* radio-set; a further 3.0% stated that they do not have a radio-set; while another 0.9% did not reply.



Of those who stated that they had a *DAB+* radio-set [≈55,500; 12.2% of the population) were then asked what type of content they listen to: 49.7% [≈27,600] of these stated that they listen to “local stations only” while 9.4% [≈5,200] stated that they listen to “only foreign radio stations”. Another 30.5% [≈16,900] stated that they listen to both local and foreign stations while another 8.5% [≈4,800] stated that although they have a *DAB+* radio-set they do not use this set.

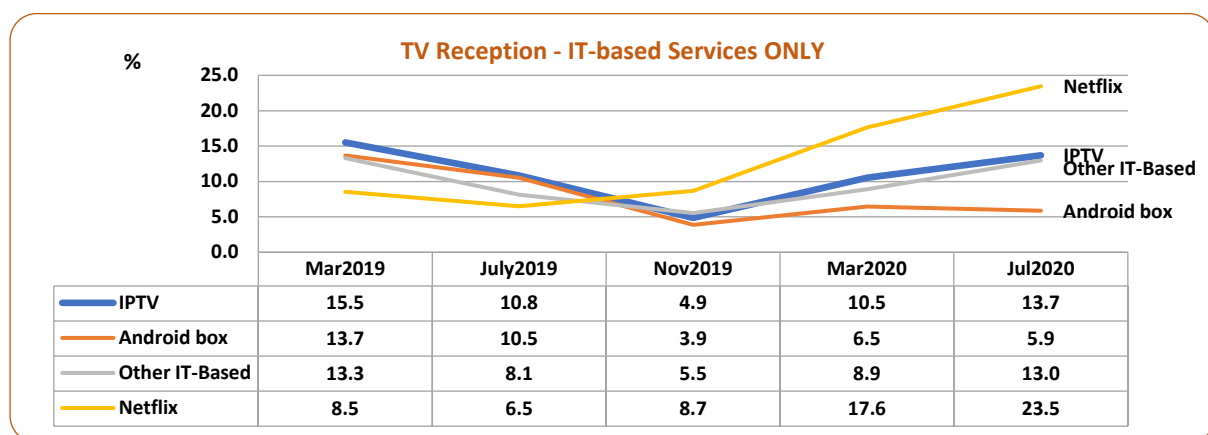


For **Television** respondents were asked what type of service they use when watching television and they could identify more than one service that they make use of.

The most common service for watching television is that of a paid subscription of both local media service providers [GO and Melita]; followed by IT based services, satellite, and Free-to-air service. IT based services include Netflix, IPTV streaming, Android box, and Other IT-based services [laptop, mobile, or tablet streaming].

For March 2020 [140.7%] there was a marked increase in the number of services used – as much as an 18.2% increase over the previous assessment period of November 2019 [122.5%]. For July 2020 [152.1%] there was a further increase of 11.4% over March 2020. And taking IT-based services, there was an increase of 14.8% for Netflix from 8.7% in November 2019 to 23.5% in July 2020; and an increase of 8.8% for IPTV from 4.9% in November to 13.7% in July 2020. There were similar increases but to a lesser extent for Android box and ‘Other’ It-bases services.

TV Reception Services					
	Mar	July	Nov	Mar	Jul
	2019	2019	2019	2020	2020
Paid Subscription	90.4	92.8	92.1	91.8	88.8
<i>IPTV</i>	15.5	10.8	4.9	10.5	13.7
<i>Android box</i>	13.7	10.5	3.9	6.5	5.9
<i>Other IT-Based</i>	13.3	8.1	5.5	8.9	13.0
<i>Netflix</i>	8.5	6.5	8.7	17.6	23.5
IT-Based services	51.0	36.0	23.0	43.6	56.0
Satellite	6.5	3.4	2.1	2.7	2.7
Free-to-air	3.6	2.4	3.9	1.8	2.9
No reply	1.1	0.4	0.7	0.4	1.2
No TV-set	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.6
	152.9	135.5	122.5	140.7	152.1



For March 2020 the highest increase was that amongst the 21-30 year olds [35.2%] while there was a decrease of only 2.8% amongst those over 71 year old. As a percentage over the whole population, the highest increase was that for Netflix [8.9% - amongst all the age groups]. The highest decrease was that for Free-to-air services [-2.0% - amongst all age groups except for 71+ year olds where there was a slight increase].

TV Reception Services – Differences by Gender, Age, and Districts [Nov 2019/March 2020]

	Total	Males	Females						Southern Northern South				Gozo &	
				12-20	21-30	31-50	51-70	71+	Harbour	Harbour	Eastern	Western	Northern	Comino
Nov 2019	122.5	126.0	119.7	144.3	133.6	120.1	111.5	112.5	125.8	127.3	119.7	111.7	119.4	115.2
Mar 2020	140.7	139.2	142.2	177.3	168.8	141.8	125.7	109.7	134.5	143.8	142.2	140.5	145.1	127.4
"+/-"	18.2	13.2	22.6	33.0	35.2	21.7	14.3	-2.8	8.7	16.5	22.5	28.8	25.7	12.2
Paid Subscriptions	-0.3	0.2	-1.7	-7.9	12.1	-2.6	8.3	-3.8	-2.7	1.0	-2.3	6.8	-0.9	1.3
Netflix	8.9	9.2	8.7	9.8	16.3	11.8	4.1	0.1	4.1	9.1	13.8	7.3	11.9	6.1
Android Box	2.6	-0.1	5.4	10.3	4.5	1.5	0.2	0.9	-1.9	4.8	2.8	4.6	1.7	1.2
IPTV	5.7	5.1	6.3	6.7	0.1	10.9	4.8	0.6	6.1	2.3	9.4	6.7	8.7	3.8
Other IT-Based	3.4	3.3	3.4	6.7	8.8	2.0	2.6	0.8	7.2	3.4	2.0	2.4	2.5	0.2
Free-to-air	-2.0	-3.6	-0.4	-1.8	-3.5	-1.8	-4.0	0.1	-4.4	-1.9	-3.2	1.0	-1.5	-1.2
Satellite	0.5	-0.1	1.2	7.3	-0.1	0.4	-1.4	-0.3	0.8	-1.1	1.1	0.8	2.0	2.3
No Reply	-0.3	-0.5	-0.2	0.0	-0.9	-1.1	0.0	0.4	0.0	-0.7	-0.7	0.0	0.8	-1.9
No TV-set	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	2.0	-2.1	0.5	-0.3	-1.5	-0.5	-0.4	-0.4	-0.9	0.6	0.3
Total "+/-"	18.2	13.2	22.6	33.0	35.2	21.7	14.3	-2.8	8.7	16.5	22.5	28.8	25.7	12.2

And during July 2020 there was a marked increase in the number of services used – as much as an 11.4% increase over the previous assessment period of March 2020. The highest increase was that amongst the 31-50 year olds [+22.4%] while there was a decrease of 4.7% amongst the 12-20 year olds. As a percentage over the whole population, the highest increase was that for Netflix [+5.8% - amongst all the age groups] while the highest decrease was that for Paid Subscriptions [-3.0% amongst all age groups] – see below.

TV Reception Services – Differences by Gender, Age, and Districts [March 2020/July 2020]

	Total	Males	Females						Southern Northern South				Gozo &	
				12-20	21-30	31-50	51-70	71+	Harbour	Harbour	Eastern	Western	Northern	Comino
Mar 2020	140.7	139.2	142.2	177.3	168.8	141.8	125.7	109.7	134.5	143.8	142.2	140.5	145.1	127.4
Jul 2020	152.1	152.7	151.6	172.6	181.7	164.2	131.4	114.0	141.4	156.8	153.3	153.2	157.4	139.0
"+/-"	11.4	13.5	9.3	-4.7	12.8	22.4	5.7	4.3	6.9	13.0	11.1	12.7	12.4	11.7
Paid Subscriptions	-3.0	-4.3	-1.6	2.0	-6.0	-2.3	-5.0	-0.6	-0.7	-6.0	-3.8	-2.7	-0.2	0.4
Netflix	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.4	7.2	10.4	0.7	1.8	7.9	8.2	-2.8	2.2	9.5	5.4
IPTV	3.2	5.1	1.1	2.1	6.6	4.4	1.6	-0.1	-2.0	5.6	1.7	6.9	2.8	1.4
Android Box	-0.6	0.4	-1.7	-9.4	-5.6	3.4	0.1	0.6	-0.3	-2.9	0.8	-0.3	1.6	0.4
Other IT-Based	4.1	3.3	4.8	0.7	9.1	5.5	2.4	-0.5	-0.3	5.1	11.4	3.7	-0.2	5.1

Free-to-air	1.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.6	1.6	1.7	0.4	0.9	4.0	-0.4	0.8	0.0
Satellite	0.1	0.7	-0.6	-4.5	-0.3	-1.0	2.7	1.3	0.1	1.3	-1.3	0.9	-1.7	-0.7
No Reply	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.3	0.0
No TV-set	0.1	0.1	0.2	-2.0	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.4	1.2	-0.6	-0.4
Total "+/-"	11.5	13.5	9.3	-4.7	12.8	22.4	5.7	4.3	6.9	13.0	11.1	12.7	12.4	11.7

Comparing to the same period of last year [July 2019] the increase in the services used was even higher [16.68%] with the highest increase being registered amongst the 31-50 year olds [+23.36%]. The highest increase was that for Netflix [+16.95%] where the 21-30 year olds increased by 33.20%, followed by the 31-50 year olds [+24.10%] and the 12-20 year olds [+21.41%] – see below.

TV Reception Services – Differences by Gender, Age, and Districts [July 2019/July 2020]

	Total	Males	Females						Southern Northern South				Gozo &	
				12-20	21-30	31-50	51-70	71+	Harbour	Harbour	Eastern	Western	Northern	Comino
July-2019	135.46	139.05	131.72	157.21	166.13	140.79	123.51	107.35	134.64	143.65	131.81	128.59	132.71	125.25
Jul-2020	152.14	152.69	151.57	172.58	181.67	164.16	131.38	114.04	141.44	156.77	153.34	153.19	157.45	139.03
" +/- "	16.68	13.64	19.85	15.37	15.54	23.36	7.87	6.69	6.80	13.11	21.53	24.59	24.74	13.78
Paid Subscriptions	-3.95	-3.49	-4.41	1.97	-7.45	-5.59	-6.11	2.18	-4.69	-6.38	-7.41	2.81	-2.33	0.52
Netflix	16.95	17.41	16.47	21.41	33.20	24.10	3.16	1.21	13.27	19.30	11.57	15.96	23.68	11.58
IPTV	2.87	3.91	1.78	-5.61	-9.70	6.42	8.14	2.87	-3.76	1.50	8.58	2.58	6.12	6.38
Android Box	-4.67	-7.26	-1.96	-10.35	-13.91	-2.89	-3.62	0.07	-2.89	-6.43	-5.10	-0.41	-5.70	-5.02
Other IT-Based	4.83	3.19	6.54	7.79	12.70	2.35	3.22	0.09	2.68	4.78	8.16	5.29	3.74	5.09
Free-to-air	0.47	-0.08	1.03	-1.69	0.53	-0.77	1.41	2.99	1.35	-2.68	5.07	1.43	0.14	2.70
Satellite	-0.67	-0.92	-0.41	2.75	-0.19	-2.19	0.45	-1.87	-0.06	1.07	-0.15	-4.96	0.05	-5.49
No Reply	0.72	0.63	0.82	-0.90	0.66	1.26	1.34	-0.46	0.93	1.49	0.40	1.13	-0.27	-1.07
No TV-set	0.12	0.26	-0.02	0.00	-0.30	0.67	-0.13	-0.38	-0.03	0.46	0.40	0.77	-0.69	-0.90
Total "+/-"	16.68	13.64	19.85	15.37	15.54	23.36	7.87	6.69	6.80	13.11	21.53	24.59	24.74	13.78

While IT-based services were increased during both March and July 2020 the number of respondents making use of only free-to-air services during March 2020 was reduced by just more than half of the previous assessment of November 2019 from approximately 10,500 to 5,200. But then, during July 2020, the amount of respondents making use of only free-to-air services has increased by 38% [from 5,174 to 7,140] over the previous assessment of March 2020 from 1.1% to 1.6% of the whole population. However, this was less than that registered for the same period last year [9,145] by 21.9%.

TV Reception Services – Free-to-air

	July 2019			Nov 2019			Mar 2020			Jul 2020		
	Free-to-air	Over N	Over N	Free-to-air	Over N	Over N	Free-to-air	Over N	Over N	Free-to-air	Over N	Over N
		%	[442,187]		%	[448,543]		%	[451,358]		%	[452,887]
Free-to-air ONLY	9,145	60.8	2.1	10,441	60.3	2.3	5,174	62.5	1.1	7,140	55.2	1.6
Free-to-air PLUS Paid Subscription	2,429	16.2	0.5	3,982	23.0	0.9	1,376	16.6	0.3	1,083	8.4	0.2
Free-to-air PLUS IT Based Services	3,463	23.0	0.8	1,499	8.7	0.3	1,729	20.9	0.4	4,707	36.4	1.0
Free-to-air PLUS More than 2 other services				1,392	8.0	0.3						
	15,037	100%	3.4	17,313	100%	3.9	8,279	100%	1.8	12,930	100%	2.9

In conclusion, there could be various factors effecting such fluctuations. Daily programming on COVID-19 at the start of the pandemic may have induced viewers to opt for more stable reception platforms than free-to-air. This became more relevant as looming lock-down directives were perceived. Restricted movements at public gatherings have induced short-term demand for Internet-based services such as Netflix and IPTV.

COVID-19 Effects on Programme Preferences

For **Television** respondents were asked what type of programmes they like to watch on local television stations. A list of eleven categories was read out by the interviewers and respondents declared their preference.

Taking all the preferences there was no change in the rankings except for Religious programmes – during July 2020 the preference for such programmes rose from the 9th place to the sixth place.

TV Programme Preferences

	Mar 2019	Jul 2019	Nov 2019	Mar 2020	Jul 2020
News Local & Foreign	20.1	23.0	19.4	26.5	24.7
Drama	14.5	14.3	13.8	14.1	15.2
Discussion & Current Affairs	10.5	10.4	11.1	12.7	11.8
Documentaries	9.6	9.8	10.5	9.3	9.3
Cultural/Educational	9.4	8.9	9.9	8.3	8.8
Sport	8.6	8.5	8.8	6.5	6.8
Light Entertainment	7.9	7.4	7.6	6.3	6.6
Music Videos	7.7	6.8	7.1	6.0	5.4
Religious	5.7	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.9
Teleshopping	3.5	3.1	3.2	2.1	2.3
Children's	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.1	2.2
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The only effect that COVID-19 restrictions had was that the preference for Local and Foreign News rose sharply from 19.4% in November 2019 to 25.5% in March 2020 and slightly decrease by 1.8% during July 2020 at 24.7%. Drama programmes also slightly increased from November 2019 [13.8%] to March 2020 [14.1%] by 0.3% and by a further 1.1% in July 2020 to 15.2%. Similar increases were also registered for Discussion & Current Affairs programmes [by 1.6% from November 2019 to March 2020 at 12.7% and losing 0.9% for July 2020 at 11.7%].

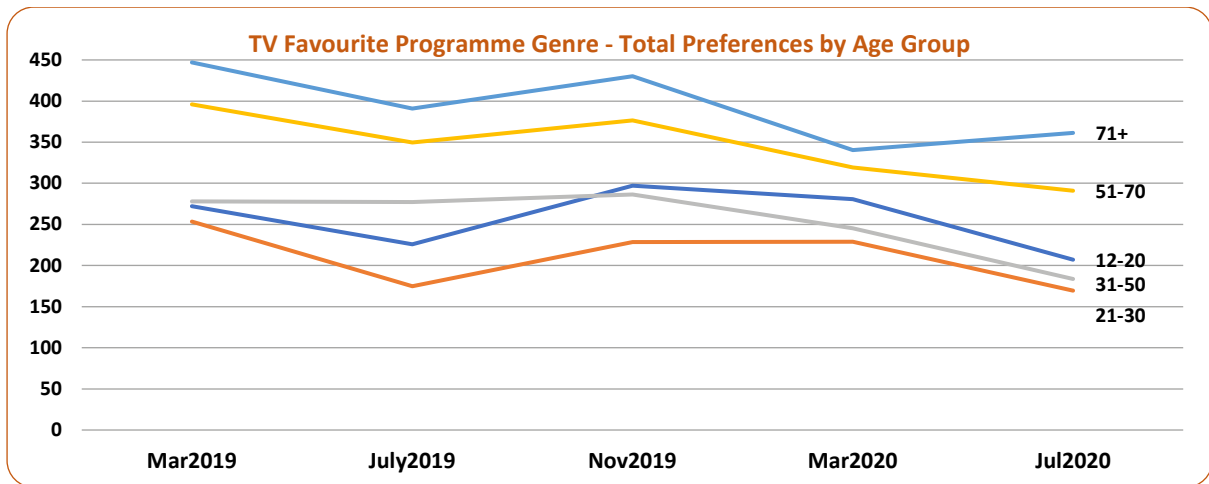
When all the responses were analysed by demographics the preference for television programmes have fallen compared to the previous assessment period [November 2019] as well as to similar periods the previous year [March and July 2019]. The only exception was that of 12-20 year olds and the 71+ year olds.

The total preferences of 12-20 year olds were 8.5% higher from those of March 2019 [272.0%] to those of March 2020 [280.5%] but then were 18.7% lower for July 2020 [207.1%] compared to those of July 2019 [225.8%].

On the other hand the preferences of 71+ year olds while following the general trends of the other age groups have increased by 21.0% for July 2020 [361.4] over the previous assessment period of March 2020 [340.0%] but were still less by 29.7% over a similar period the previous year [July 2019: 391.1%].

TV Programme Preferences by Gender and Age Groups

	Gender			Age Groups				
	Total	Males	Females	12-20	21-30	31-50	51-70	71+
Mar2020								
News Local & Foreign	74.0	74.4	73.5	58.3	63.3	70.2	84.8	86.2
Drama	39.5	30.8	48.6	41.6	39.6	33.2	42.8	46.0
Discussion & Current Affairs	35.4	33.7	37.1	25.5	23.5	30.2	45.3	49.5
Documentaries	26.0	27.5	24.4	20.7	20.4	21.9	33.9	31.5
Cultural/Educational	23.2	20.5	26.0	21.3	21.6	19.6	28.6	25.4
Sport	18.2	28.4	7.5	32.6	14.2	17.6	17.5	16.4
Light Entertainment/Comedy/Games	17.7	14.5	21.1	28.2	18.7	15.0	17.4	16.8
Music Videos	16.7	16.0	17.5	32.7	18.8	15.1	13.4	13.6
Religious	16.7	11.8	21.8	10.1	3.5	9.3	24.4	38.1
Teleshopping	5.9	3.1	8.8	0.9	1.4	4.7	8.3	12.3
Children's	5.9	5.1	6.7	8.6	4.1	8.7	3.2	4.4
	279.2	265.9	293.1	280.5	229.1	245.4	319.3	340.4
Jul2020								
News Local & Foreign	58.8	59.1	58.4	27.2	39.8	55.0	72.9	84.1
Drama	36.0	24.8	47.8	35.4	32.5	27.8	41.4	48.9
Discussion & Current Affairs	28.0	25.6	30.5	8.5	20.5	20.8	39.5	44.5
Documentaries	22.2	22.8	21.5	16.5	15.4	16.6	29.6	33.0
Cultural/Educational	21.0	19.1	22.9	26.3	11.3	17.3	24.5	31.2
Religious	16.3	10.3	22.6	10.0	2.8	5.7	24.5	44.5
Sport	16.1	25.5	6.3	24.7	14.4	10.8	15.8	24.8
Light Entertainment/Comedy/Games	15.7	12.0	19.7	23.6	15.7	11.7	17.4	17.2
Music Videos	12.8	10.6	15.2	22.7	8.9	9.5	14.2	16.6
Teleshopping	5.5	3.2	7.9	2.3	1.3	3.1	8.1	13.3
Children's	5.1	3.3	7.0	9.9	6.9	5.4	3.1	3.2
	237.5	216.3	259.8	207.1	169.5	183.7	291.0	361.4
Totals								
March 2019	332.8	315.3	350.8	272.0	253.4	277.8	396.0	447.0
July 2019	297.1	295.4	298.9	225.8	174.7	277.2	349.8	391.1
November 2019	328.5	321.5	335.9	297.1	228.7	286.4	376.4	430.1
March 2020	279.2	265.9	293.1	280.5	229.1	245.4	319.3	340.4
July 2020	237.5	216.3	259.8	207.1	169.5	183.7	291.0	361.4



For **Radio** respondents were asked which radio programme they normally follow. Unlike television where audiences follow programmes, radio listening is time-based - very few radio listeners switch on at the beginning of a programme, and off at the end of it. Listeners' habits are more fixed early in the day – they tend to listen to the same station at about the same time every day. Habits are less rigid in the middle of the day, and least rigid late at night.

This was an open-ended question and the respondents either named a specific programme genre or named a particular radio programme – or rather named a specific radio anchor. Specific programme genres were classified accordingly while those naming a specific programme or radio anchor these were classified separately.

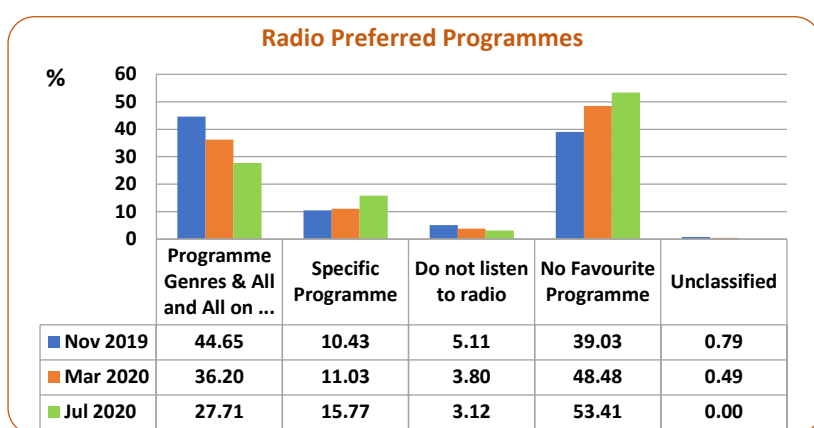
We can classify radio programmes under two general headings: spoken word and music. Since radio broadcasts can be split into five segments of any broadcast day, we have chosen to classify those respondents who named specific anchors and/or programmes under five main time-brackets:

- The Morning Drive 06:00am - 10:00am [Breakfast/Morning Shows; News & Weather reports; and Sportscast];
- Daytime 10.00am - 3.00pm [Call-in/Request shows; Talk Shows; Radio Drama];
- Afternoon Drive 3.00pm - 7.00pm [Factual; Entertainment & Comedy];
- Evening 7.00pm - 12.00am [Music Chart Show; Live Music]; and
- Overnight 12.00am - 6.00am [Religion & Ethics; Music Show].

Of all the responses there was a high increase in the number of people who did not have any favourite programme genre when listening to radio rising by 9.45% from November 2019 [39.03%] to March 2020 [48.48%] and by a further 4.93% in July 2020 [53.41%]. On the other hand, while those who named a specific programme on radio have increased by 5.34% from November 2019 [10.43%] to July 2020 [15.77%], those respondents who named a programme genre have reduced by 16.94% from November 2019 [44.65%] to July 2020 [27.71%].

The first set of responses analysed were those who listened radio for a specific programme genre. While 19.3% of the replies in July 2020 indicated that they like anything that is broadcast on radio and/or on a specific radio station, as much as 60% of this group listens to Music programmes.

For March 2020 for the second most quoted programme genre News & Newspaper Analysis, there was an increase of 1.81% from November 2019 [6.79%] to March 2020 [8.6%]; slightly decreasing by 1.5% in July [7.1%].



Prayers & Religious programmes ranked third in both March 2020 [5.5%] and in July 2020 [5.0%] while there was a significant decrease in Discussion programmes from 8.6% in November 2019 to 5.2% in March 2020 and to 3.2% in July 2020.

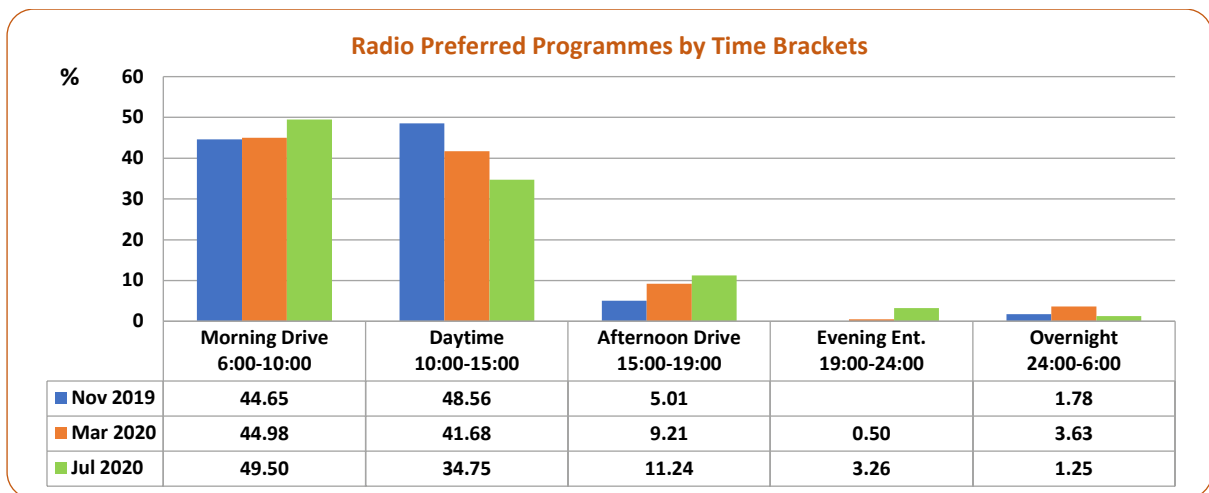
There was also an increase in Breakfast Shows from 1.42% in November 2019 to 3.9% in March 2020, reducing to 2.7% in July 2020.

The second group of responses were of those who named a specific programme on radio and/or named the anchor of a programme. These responses were checked against the prevailing schedules of each broadcasting quarter.

The number of respondents who have indicated a specific programme on radio rose from 10.43% in November 2019 to 15.77% in July 2020. Practically the same percentages prevailed throughout the year. However, of note are the increase in Morning Drive programmes, in Afternoon Drive programmes, and in Evening Entertainment Programmes in July 2020. There was only one other significant increase – that of Overnight programmes during March 2020.

Radio Programme Genres

	Nov 2019	Mar 2020	Jul 2020
Music	58.72	59.6	60.0
Discussion Programmes	8.60	5.2	3.2
News & Newspaper Analysis	6.79	8.6	7.1
Prayers & Religious Programmes	6.29	5.5	5.0
Breakfast Show	1.42	3.9	2.7
Magazine Programmes	0.56	0.1	
Cultural Programmes	0.52		
Variety programs	0.50		
Sports	0.42	0.6	
Radio Drama	0.33	1.2	0.5
Health Programmes	0.29	0.1	0.2
Educational Programmes	0.15	0.2	0.7
Home Cooking	0.18		
Current Affairs	0.14	0.2	
Weather Reports	0.14		
Quizzes	0.10		
Political		0.7	0.9
Maltese Language & Customs		0.2	
History			0.4
All & All on Radio ...	14.85	14.0	19.3
	100.00	100.00	100.00



Concluding remarks:

This brings to end this year’s radio and television consumer analysis and we have concentrated our efforts to highlight the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumers who had a somewhat limited movement at the start during March with more freedom of movement as restrictions were eased up during July 2020.

More specific data is available for download through the Broadcasting Authority’s website not only for the assessments discussed but also for previous assessments published by the Broadcasting Authority.

11.2 December Audience Survey

During the years the Broadcasting Authority has received several suggestions from various media stakeholders on the audience survey and decided that it was time to make some changes to the Audience Assessment. In this regard the October / November audience survey for 2020 was not held. The Authority however conducted a survey in December 2020, the analysis and results of which will be incorporated in the 2021 annual report. Among the changes, the December survey covered one week as opposed to one whole month, included mobile rather than just landline, and covered the online media services rather than just radio and television.

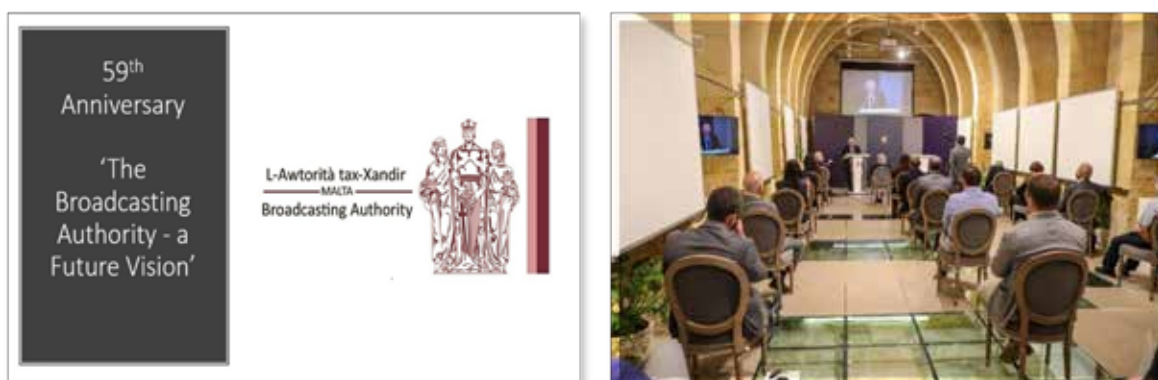
The data for this assessment was collected between 14th and 20th December 2020 as Covid-19 pandemic persists. This survey included changes in terms of collection of data, research methodology, data analysis and presentation of findings.

Because of the changes which were envisaged through PR 18/20, in December 2020, this survey does not make comparisons to previous audience assessment surveys. M. FSADNI & Associates were selected to conduct the research, however, the selected research methodology and analysis were determined in collaboration with the Broadcasting Authority. The research findings cover TV viewership, Radio listenership, Online viewership, and preferred source for local news.

12. 59th anniversary of the Broadcasting Authority

59th Anniversary of the Broadcasting Authority held at San Anton -29 September 2020

On the occasion of the 59th Anniversary since the set-up of the Broadcasting Authority, the Chairman of the Authority, Mr Frank V. Farrugia spoke about the participation and contribution of chairpersons who led the Authority in previous years, and the need for changes in a context of a changing media industry that is using different platforms that have now become more accessible. This was held at San Anton Palace on 29th September 2020 under the patronage of the His Excellency the Presidency Dr George Vella and the Authority also presented a donation to the Malta Community Chest Foundation.



The Chairman highlighted a work plan for the Authority's future, with the first challenge being the transposition of the new Directive governing the audio visual media services – AVMS. This Directive will be broadening responsibilities not only by the Broadcasting Authority but also the responsibilities of service providers, some of which would not have been regulated. The Chairman emphasized the importance to invest in human resources that will enable the Authority to cater for the regulation and licensing of the new services.



Another work for the Authority in the coming years is the consolidation exercise of the Subsidiary Broadcasting and Legislation Act so that the law is in line with industry developments. In this way the Authority understands the criticism that due to existing legislation the Authority does not follow the pace of society, culture and industry. In fact, a subcommittee will be set up to study the law as it stands, and proposals will be made to reflect changes not only in the media industry but also changes in Maltese society.

The Chairman continued that due to increased media consumption and an increase in messages from various audio visual media services, the Authority will continue to work and improve the work that had already started, that of media literacy.

He said that the Authority will be training people already contributing to the media and also educating media consumers. And so next year the Authority will be working on a training project where if necessary, it also invites experts to different broadcasting areas to train journalists and producers and media owners. This is a continuation of work that had already started last November where the Authority studied the state of quality in television broadcasting.

Another plan will focus on radio broadcasting and in fact the Authority has started intense work to transform the FM and digital radio stations to a state of the art whilst maintaining the Għargħur site in an excellent security state. He also said that a study and technical analysis will be initiated for when the change from FM transmission to digital takes place. He added that discussions and a study on the possible change need to be carried out with the aim for a smooth transition for both service providers and listeners.



The Authority's CEO, Dr Joanna Spiteri, also spoke, during the activity. She looked at specific work done by the Authority dealing with the representation of women and men in current affairs programmes. The aim of this work was to study the current situation in this area with a view to designing guidelines for broadcasters addressing the representation of women and men in this genre of programmes. She said that when we watch certain programmes we often ask where women are and sometimes also programmes of this genre continue to strengthen the patriarchal society, we live in. She said that these messages and this stretch of content do not help to bring about a fairer representation between the two sexes. She said that both sexes are affected by decisions made in all areas of life and both sexes can say their own thoughts, but it seems that not both sexes are being given that space to tell their respective views.



The Chief Executive said that this study did not only deal with the content of the programmes but also looked at production and presentation. The study analysed the gender of presenters and journalists who dealt with current stories in these programmes. Against the background of this study the Authority will work on guidelines with a view to starting a process of changing the culture of producing such programmes. It concluded that this will be the start of work by the Authority to put forward necessary changes in broadcasting while continuing to focus on its obligations to protect impartiality under the Constitution and ensure that it operates the implementation of the Broadcasting Act and other legislation.



Publication /presentation of ‘Assessment of Gender Representation in Current Affairs programmes

During the same event the assessment on the Gender Representation in Current Affairs Programmes was also presented and a copy of the study disseminated to those present.

Gender Representation in Current Affairs Programmes

One of the first advisory committees set up by the Broadcasting Authority was the Advisory Committee on Gender Issues (1999) to advise on the introduction and adaptation of guidelines concerning gender issues in programme content. The genres of programmes available on local television stations are

quite extensive and following discussions and directions by the Chief Executive Officer of the Broadcasting Authority, Dr Joanna Spiteri, it was decided to research gender representation in current affairs programmes.

Current affairs programmes deal with events of political or social interest and importance, happening both locally and abroad. They are in fact news programmes which give more details about one or more particular news item/s and can be of two types or both, that is studio programmes and field productions. Studio programmes are prepared in the studios and can take different formats like talks on a particular subject of common interest and utility; discussions which can include a panel/forum and/or audience participated discussion; documentaries which would contain the real words of real persons and the sound of events; interviews which are usually recorded before being broadcast but can also be broadcast live; and archive film, amongst others.

Such programmes change their format to maintain the viewers' interest while focusing on current topics which would merit national discussion. Such programmes are broadcast to explain the significance, consequences, and the effect of one or more news items on people.

And it was also decided that the study would be a perfect assignment for a media student from an educational institution during the summer break. The Authority thanks Ms Marianna Calleja, Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) Journalism at MCAST Institute for the Creative Arts who has viewed the programmes and collected the data while the Head of Research and Communication, Mr Mario Axiak prepared the final report and conclusions.

And as part of the Authority's 59th Anniversary Celebration a presentation of the findings was presented at the President's Palace on September 2020 by Ms Marianna Calleja. A total of 21 programme broadcast between 1st and 12th October 2018 from five leading television stations were selected for analysis on gender balance. The programmes were all current affairs programmes broadcast at prime time on TVM, ONE, Net TV, Fliving, Smash TV. The analysis of the data was two fold – the presentation of the programmes and the involvement of participants in each item discussed in programmes.

The programmes were analysed according to the scope, type and topic of the items compared to the gender and age of the anchor, reporter, journalist or commentator. A total of 861 items were identified for this study.

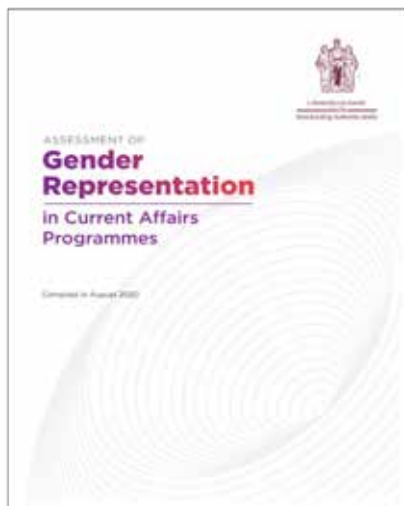
Almost 75% of the news items were categorised as national items, 11.5% national but included other countries, 3.3% dealt with international issues and 10.3% concerned localised issues. The study showed that male main anchors covered more types of items than female anchors; females only exceeded males in two types of item – lifestyle and economical/statistical items. It was found that males exceeded females most in investigative, editorial opinion, technology, political, sports and social issues. With regards to guests and panels, as much as 53.2% of the items included one or more guests for their presentation, and slightly more than 46% were presented by the anchors, reporters, and or/other journalists.

A total of 716 guests were invited where slightly more than 81% were males and slightly over 18% were females. If these guests were to be analysed by gender and age differences, one concludes that female guests are younger in age than their male counterpart. Guests were analysed by occupation. Although a quarter of participants were politicians this is acceptable due to the nature of the programmes that were monitored. However, the range of occupations was quite extensive.

All male guests by occupation included Government representatives, trade unionist-employers, trade unionist-workers, religious leaders, court representatives, sport players.

From this study broadcast media is male oriented, females take a second role in such genre.

The publication is available for download from the Authority's website (www.ba-malta.org) and both speeches of Chairman and Chief Executive of the Broadcasting Authority can be found in Appendix 1.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Diskors tal-ftuħ mill-Kap Eżekuttiv fl-okkażjoni tad-59 sena mit-twaqqif tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir

Insellmilkom. L-għodwa t-tajba lil kulhadd u grazzi Eċċellenza li lqajtna hawnhekk sabiex flimkien niċċelebraw, id-59 sena mit-twaqqif tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir. Il-ħsieb tal-Awtorità kien li matul din il-ġimgħa jiġu organizzati sensiela ta' attivitajiet lill-istakeholders kif ukoll attivitajiet oħra ta' għarfien dwar ir-rwol li għandha din l-istituzzjoni kostituzzjonali. Izda ċ-ċirkostanzi li gābet il-pandemija riedu mod ieħor u għalhekk kellna nillimitaw l-attivitajiet u nillimta l-parteciġazzjoni.

Izda llum xtaqna li fil-preżenza tal-Eċċellenza Tiegħu nuru l-pjan ta' ħidma għas-snin li ġejjin, liema pjan ser ikun qed jiġi pprezentat miċ-Chairman tal-Awtorità s-Sur Frank V Farrugia.

Ma stajniex inħallu l-anniversarju jgħaddi izda mingħajr ma nagħtu ħarsa lejn xogħol partikolari li sar fost l-operat tal-Awtorità f'dan l-aħħar perjodu qabel il-pandemija, liema xogħol se jkun qed iservi u jwitti t-triq għal xogħol ieħor essenzjali li qed jiġi pplanat. Fil-fatt l-istatistika li se nkunu qed naraw aktar tard illum, kienet parti minn xogħol li sar internament, grazzi għal Marianna Calleja li hija studenta tal-MCAST u li l-Awtorità ħasset li timpenja studenta biex taħdem fuq dan il-proġett u tiġbor id-data li hemm bżonn. Wara, din id-data ingābret mis-Sur Mario Axiak li sax-xahar l-ieħor kien il-Kap tar-Riċerka u l-Komunikazzjoni fi ħdan l-Awtorità. L-għan ta' dan ix-xogħol kien li tiġi studjata the state of play fir-rigward tar-rappreżentazzjoni tan-nisa u irġiel fi programmi ta' ġrajjet kurrenti u b'hekk ikunu jistgħu jinħadmu b'mod aktar professjonali l-linji gwida li hemm bżonn rigward din il-materja. Fil-fatt l-Awtorità fix-xhur li ġejjin se tkun qed tfejji linji gwida għax-xandara sabiex jagħrfu kif għandhom jimxu fir-rigward tar-rappreżentazzjoni tan-nisa u l-irġiel. Ħafna drabi meta naraw ċerti programmi nistaqsu fejn huma n-nisa, naraw kontenut mimli sterjotipar fir-rigward tas-sessi, niltaqgħu ma' daww li nsejħulhom the silence of men and the silence of women, xi drabi wkoll naraw it-tisħiħ tas-soċjetà patrijarkali li ngħixu fiha. Messaġġi li kontinwament narawhom u li xi drabi wkoll, issa aktar minn qatt qabel ikomplu jissaħħu b'kummenti taċ-ċittadini, fuq il-pjattaformi tal-midja soċjali. Dawn il-kummenti u messaġġi żgur ma jgħinix biex ikun hemm rappreżentazzjoni aktar fair tas-sessi, m'iniex qed ngħid rappreżentazzjoni ugwali imma rappreżentazzjoni aktar ġusta għaliex wara kollox iż-żewġ sessi huma milqutin minn temi ta' ġrajjet kurrenti, iż-żewġ sessi huma affettwati minn deċiżjonijiet li jittieħdu f'kull qasam tal-ħajja, sew jekk politiku u sew jekk mħuwix, iż-żewġ sessi jistgħu jgħidu tagħhom f'dak kollu li qed jiġri f'Malta u lil hinn minn xtutna u allura dan irid ikun rifless fuq il-programmi televiżivi. Aktar 'il quddiem se naraw kemm iż-żewġ sessi qed jingħataw spazju biex jgħidu tagħhom anke jekk il-fehmiet huma differenti.

Filwaqt li l-Awtorità tirregola l-kontenut izda wkoll tisserva wkoll il-mod kif joperaw l-istazzjonijiet u fil-fatt ix-xogħol ukoll gābar informazzjoni dwar ir-riżorsi umani li jagħmlu parti mill-produzzjoni ta' dawn il-programmi, fis-sens ta' preżentaturi, ġurnalisti u kontributori ta' dawn il-programmi. Dan l-istudju u anke l-linji gwida se jkunu wkoll qed jittrattaw mhux biss il-kontenut persè tal-programm, imma wkoll se jkunu qed jagħmlu referenza għall-produzzjoni tal-programm mill-preżentaturi jew ġurnalisti magħzula għall-programm.

Ħafna drabi l-Awtorità tiġi kkritikata li qiegħda hemm għall-akkużi u għall-multi, izda dan ix-xogħol u xogħol ieħor li se tkunu qed tisimgħu aktar 'il quddiem żgur li mhux se jkun juri dan. Filwaqt li l-Awtorità qiegħda hemm biex timplimenta l-ligi, imma trid tara wkoll li tkun minn ta' quddiem li tara kif jista' jitjieb ix-xandir f'Malta. Wara kollox ix-xandir huwa mera tas-soċjetà li minnha joħroġ. Dan se jkun wieħed mill-proġetti li se tkun qed tara li twettaq l-Awtorità fl-immedjat għaliex hemm bżonn ta' bidla fil-kultura ta' kif wieħed jipproduċi l-programmi. Ninsab ċerta li din se tkun il-bidu ta' ħidma mill-

Awtorità biex tpoġġi 'l quddiem tibdiliet meħtieġa fix-xandir filwaqt li tkompli tiffoka wkoll fuq l-obbligi tagħha ta' ħarsien ta' imparzjalità skont il-Kostituzzjoni u tara li tħaddem l-implimentazzjoni tal-Att dwar ix-Xandir u leġislazzjonijiet oħra.

Se nieqaf hawn u nagħti spazju għad-diskors tač-Chairman.

29 ta' Settembru 2020

Diskors mič-Chairman fl-okkażjoni tad-59 sena mit-twaqqif tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir

Insellmilkom u l-għodwa t-tajba lil kulħadd. Nirringrazzja lill-Eccellenza Tiegħu l-President ta' Malta Dr George Vella li laqagħna fil-Palazz tiegħu. Kif indikajna x-xewqa mal-President Dr Vella, li f'għeluq id-59 sena mit-twaqqif tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir, mill-ewwel ačċetta li nagħmlu din l-attività fil-Palazz tiegħu. Xtaqna li tkun attività ferm ikbar fejn inlaqqgħu firxa ikbar ta' stakeholders iżda minħabba s-sitwazzjoni diffiċli li gabet magħha l-pandemija kellna nagħmlu bosta restrizzjonijiet u nillimitaw ruħna għal din il-laqgħa qasira.

Fič-čirkostanzi preżenti nirringrazzjakom li ačċettajtu l-istedina tal-Awtorità sabiex ikollna l-okkażjoni li niltaqgħu flimkien imma l-aktar importanti li nwasslu l-pjan ta' ħidma, minn fejn tlaqna u 'l fejn irridu mmorru. Ovvjament minkejja li aħna r-regolatur hemm partijiet mit-triq 'il quddiem li mhijiex se tkun weħidna. Din l-attività ser isservi wkoll biex nuru wkoll ħidma li saret f'dawn l-aħħar xhur internament fl-Awtorità bil-għan li nfasslu proġetti oħra.

Kif tafu ilni fit-tmun tal-Awtorità inqas minn sena, fil-fatt għaxar xhur, žmien bižżejjed biex nara x'kisbiet kellha l-Awtorità, x'ħidma għamlet l-Awtorità matul is-snin grazzi għas-sehem u l-kontribut ta' Chairpersons li kienu qabli. Tajjeb li tara x'sar minn ta' qablek f'dawn l-aħħar 59 sena iżda l-għan tiegħi huwa li mmexxi 'l quddiem l-Awtorità anke f'kuntest ta' industrija tal-midja li dejjem tevolvi u tinbidel, midja li qed tinfirex partikolarment b'użu ta' pjattaformi differenti li issa saru aktar ačċessibbli. Għalhekk ir-regolatur tax-xandir ukoll irid jevolvi sabiex filwaqt li jara li l-mezzi tax-xandir ikunu regolati, jara wkoll li dan kollu qed isir biex iħares l-interess pubbliku. Ix-xandir mhuwiex statiku u għaldaqstant l-Awtorità, filwaqt li žżomm id-dinjità ta' Istituzzjoni Kostituzzjonali, trid tevolvi maž-żminijiet u mat-talbiet tal-industrija. Trid tara s-sitwazzjoni tal-industrija tal-midja imma ma tinsix ukoll il-ħsus u l-ħsibijiet tal-konsumaturi tal-midja li filwaqt li jsegwu x-xandir, iżda huma wkoll iridu jkunu parti minn din l-industrija.

Fil-fatt iż-żieda ta' pjattaformi differenti b'mod partikolari l-internet u s-social media, iffačilitat l-ačċess għall-konsumaturi tal-midja, iżda ħafna drabi l-informazzjoni li tingħata fuq is-social media mhijiex waħda professjonali għaliex in-natura tal-midja hija dik li hi, u għalhekk il-midja tradizzjonali u l-midja ġdida online li wħud minnhom ukoll jaħdmu f'qafas strutturat u professjonali għandhom responsabbiltajiet u obbligi x'jaqdu lejn il-konsumatur. Obbligi li jipprovdi qabelxejn informazzjoni professjonali, b'sorsi ufficjali u verifikati, informazzjoni akkurata u li tista' tafda u žgur li mhux l-inqas f'sitwazzjoni preżenti ta' pandemija – informazzjoni vera mingħajr ebda sensazzjonalizmu u allarm žejjed imma li tirispekka l-istampa čara ta' dak li jkun qed jiġri. U f'dan l-isfond l-ewwel sfida li se tkun qed tiltaqa' magħha l-Awtorità hija t-traspożizzjoni tad-Direttiva l-ġdida li tirregola s-servizzi tal-mezzi awdjo viziva – l-AVMS. Din id-Direttiva se tkun qed twessa' r-responsabbiltajiet mhux biss tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir imma wkoll r-responsabbiltajiet tal-provditori tas-servizzi li wħud minnhom ma kinux qed

jigü regolati. F'dan ix-xenarju l-Awtorità tax-Xandir qed tara li l-leġiżlazzjoni mxiet pass ieħor lejn level playing field għalkemm kulhadd jifhem li fis-settur tal-midja bit-teknoloġija li dejjem tavanza u bi thaddim ta' pjattaformi diversi dan il-level playing field huwa kemxejn diffiċli biex jintlaħaq għaliex anke n-natura tal-pjattaforma stess tikkomplika l-affarijiet.

Għalhekk apparti l-ewwel sfida tal-implimentazzjoni tad-Direttiva, l-Awtorità se jkollha sfida oħra li trid tiffaccja b'riżultat ta' dan. U din hija sfida tar-riżorsi umani u l-operat innifsu tal-Awtorità. L-Awtorità trid tinvesti fir-riżorsi uman, saħansitra l-pjan li tibdel kemxejn il-modus operandi tal-Awtorità biex tkun tista' tilqa' għal servizzi ġodda li se jkunu qed jidhru taħt il-kappa tagħha kemm mil-lat ta' regolamentazzjoni kif ukoll mil-lat ta' liċenzjar. Dan jeħtieġ ħsieb u tfassil bil-għaqal biex tiġi studjata l-qagħda preżenti tar-riżorsi umani u wara tfassal pjan ta' operat differenti biex filwaqt li tamministra u timplimenta s-servizzi li kienet qed tkopri s'issa tara li tkopri servizzi li jista' jkun jinvolvu amministrazzjoni xi ftit differenti. L-ewwel pjan ta' ħidma se tkun qed tkopri din il-parti tar-regolamentazzjoni u tal-implimentazzjoni u l-Awtorità se tkun qed tiddedika parti mill-enerġija f'din il-materja.

Minbarra t-thaddim u l-implimentazzjoni ta' din id-Direttiva, inħoss li wasal iż-żmien biex jiġi emendat l-Att dwar ix-Xandir u l-Leġiżlazzjonijiet Sussidjarja. Fil-fatt mill-aktar fis se nkun qed nara li jibda dan l-eżerċizzju ta' konsolidament tal-Att. Inħoss li huwa importanti ħafna li l-liġi timxi pari passu mal-iżviluppi tal-industrija, xi haġa li sfortunament jidher li ma saritx matul is-snin. Dan iwassal għal diffikultajiet xi drabi fuq l-implimentazzjoni tagħha u l-kritika lill-Awtorità li mhijiex timxi mal-pass tas-soċjetà, tal-kultura u tal-industrija. Għalhekk fi żmien li ġej se jitwaqqaf sottokumitat li jistudja l-liġi kif inhi bħalissa u jsiru wkoll proposti ta' kif għandha tinbidel bil-għan li tirrifletti t-tibdiliet mhux biss fl-industrija tal-midja imma wkoll li tirrifletti t-tibdil fis-soċjetà Maltija.

Minbarra t-tibdiliet fl-Att u fil-liġi li hija l-ghodda tal-Awtorità li thaddem bħala parti mill-obbligi tagħha, l-Awtorità wkoll hija lesta li tadatta għal tibdiliet li jista' jkun hemm b'riżultat ta' emendi Kostituzzjonali. Bħala entità kostituzzjonali, l-Awtorità trid tara li tibqa' awtonoma u indipendenti mill-Gvern u dwar dan se nkun qed nara li jkompli jsir fis-snin li ġejjin. F'kuntest politiku Malti, l-għan prinċipali tal-Awtorità huwa li thares l-obbligi ta' imparzjalità u tara li kull veduta tkun aċċessibbli għall-pubbliku. Kull veduta trid tingħata spazju adegwat sakemm din tirrispetta l-veduti l-oħra u sakemm l-etika tkun imħarsa. Dan kollu huwa wkoll fil-kuntest li kull informazzjoni tkun akkurata u tingħata b'mod ġust (fair).

Minħabba zieda fil-konsum tal-midja u zieda ta' messaġġi minn diversi servizzi tal-midja awdjoviżiva jqum il-ħsieb dwar l-importanza li l-messaġġ li jingħata jinftiehem u l-Awtorità se tkun qed ittejjeb fuq xi xogħol li kien diġà beda jsir, dak ta' media literacy. Media literacy għandu żewġ fergħat – waħda li teduka lil min qed jikkonsma l-midja u l-oħra li tharreg u ttejjeb il-ħiliet tan-nies li diġà qed jikkontribwixxu fil-qasam tal-midja. Għalhekk għas-snin li ġejjin l-Awtorità se tkun qed toħloq sistema strutturata ta' taħriġ għan-nies fl-industrija u għas-sena d-dieħla fil-fatt se tkun qed timbarka fuq proġett ta' taħriġ billi jekk ikun hemm bżonn iġġib ukoll esperti f'oqsma differenti tax-xandir sabiex iħarrġu l-produtturi u l-ġurnalisti u min imexxi l-istazzjonijiet. Dan ukoll huwa riżultat ta' xogħol li kien diġà sar u skont rapport li ġie pprezentat mill-Awtorità f'Novembru li ghadda fejn l-Awtorità studjat il-qagħda tal-kwalità fix-xandir televiżiv. B'dan se nkomplu nwessgħu għal pjattaformi tal-midja differenti u nixtiequ naraw aktar nies imħarrġa u aġġornata jaħdmu f'dan il-qasam. Ovvjament dan ikun possibbli wkoll bil-kooperazzjoni tagħkom u tan-nies fl-industrija li jipparteċipaw f'dawn il-korsijiet jew laqgħat ta' taħriġ li l-Awtorità se tara li torganizza s-sena d-dieħla.

Dan ikun l-ewwel pass ta' ħidma ta' media literacy, liema pass imbagħad jeħodna biex nimmiraw il-ħidma tagħna lill-konsumaturi tal-midja. Ovvjament din il-ħidma tista' ssir bil-kollaborazzjoni ma'

entitajiet differenti, fosthom is-settur edukattiv biex nifirxu l-media literacy fost il-minuri u l-adoxxenti.

F'dan ix-xenarju żgur li numru ta' reach outs li diġà kien hemm tentattiv li jsiru mill-Awtorità fis-snin li għaddew, jtkomplew sabiex filwaqt li r-regolatur ma jinqatax mill-produtturi tal-midja, l-Awtorità tara wkoll li s-servizzi tal-midja jkomplu jaġġornaw ruħhom.

Il-pjan ta' hidma tal-Awtorità għas-snin li ġejjin se tkun ukoll qed tiffoka fuq ix-xandir tar-radju u matul dawn l-aħħar xhur bdiet hidma intensa biex is-sit tal-Għargħur minn fejn jitrażmettu l-istazzjonijiet tar-radju FM u diġitali jinbidel f'sit state of the art. Dan is-sit se jkollu l-facilitajiet kollha li hemm bżonn ta' saħħa u sigurtà kemm għall-ħaddiema u kuntratturi mqabbdha mill-Awtorità imma wkoll anke għas-sidien tal-istazzjonijiet tar-radju li jużaw dan is-sit. Bla dubju dan il-proġett huwa uġiġ ta' ras biex naraw li dan is-sit ikun immaniġjat b'mod professjonali. Għalhekk se jsir investiment kbir biex dan is-sit li huwa meqjus bħala sit ta' infrastruttura kritika u ta' mportanza wkoll nazzjonali għall-pajjiż kollu, ikun qed jinżamm fi stat eċċellenti. Minkejja ż-żieda ta' pjattaformi tal-midja differenti, l-Awtorità tħoss li x-xandir tar-radju għad hemm postu u għalhekk ikun jixraq li dan is-servizz jintlaħaq minn kulħadd u b'mod tajjeb u din hija waħda mir-raġunijiet għala l-Awtorità tħoss li għandha tkompli tinvesti f'dan is-sit. Tħoss ukoll li għandhom jibdeu l-istudju u l-analiżi teknika għal meta jista' jkun hemm il-qalba bejn ix-xandir FM għal dak diġitali. Minkejja li qed nitkellmu għal perjodu kemxejn itwal ta' żmien iżda żgur li jeħtieġ li jibdeu isiru diskussjonijiet u studju dwar il-possibbiltà ta' din il-qalba biex filwaqt li l-provdituri jibqgħu jkollhom l-aċċess li jxandru, is-semmiegħa ma jiġux imcaħħda minn dan id-dritt li jkollhom it-trażmissjonijiet tar-radju li huwa essenzjali f'soċjetà demokratika.

Filwaqt li dan kollu huwa marbut max-xandir lokali nazzjonali, iżda żgur li ma nistgħux ninsew li aħna qegħdin f'bozza. No man is an island u dan jgħodd ukoll għar-regolatur tax-xandir. Għal snin l-Awtorità tax-Xandir kienet tiffirma parti min-networks barranin – fosthom Ewropej u Mediterranji. Għalhekk se nkun qed nara li ntejbu r-relazzjonijiet ma' regolaturi barranin oħra u naraw best practices li qed isiru f'pajjiżi oħra u dan biex inkunu nistgħu nsarrfuh f'hidma għall-ġid tas-servizzi tal-midja lokali. Wara kollox anke bis-saħħa tal-AVMS li hija regolamentazzjoni Ewropea, l-Awtorità trid tara wkoll li l-proċeduri kollha jitqabblu ma' dan.

Dan huwa togħma ta' azzjonijiet u pjan ta' hidma li l-Awtorità se tkun qed timbarka fuqha matul is-snin li ġejjin. Bla dubju li jkun hemm affarijiet li flimkien magħkom inkunu nisgħu naħdmu fuqhom, nifhem li mhux dejjem se nkunu qed naqblu f'kolli imma jien konvint li żgur li naqblu li l-industrija tal-midja tkun waħda mill-aqwa industrija fil-pajjiż...nittamaw ukoll li jkollna wkoll prodott tajjeb li nistgħu wkoll nesportaw.

29 ta' Settembru 2020

APPENDIX 2

Gender Representation in Current Affairs Programmes

Summary of Findings

Twenty-one programmes broadcast between 1st and 12th October 2018 from five leading television stations were selected for analysis on gender balance. The programmes were all current affairs programmes broadcast at prime time on TVM, ONE, Net TV, F Living and Smash. The analysis of the data collected focused on two areas: the presentation of the programmes themselves, and the involvement of outsiders in each item.

The programmes were analysed according to the scope, type and topic of the items compared to the gender and age of the anchor, reporter, and/or other journalist/commentator of the item presented. The involvement of guests was analysed by the number of guests used per item (ranging from one guest to a case of 5 and 6 guests on the same item), the occupation and a society label of the guests by gender and age.

A total of 861 items were identified during 95.3hrs of broadcasts.

Scope of the Items

Items in programmes were first grouped according to the overall objective – whether it concerns an item of local and/or national interest and whether this has an international influence.

- As much as 74.9% of these items dealt with National items, 11.5% with National and Other Country/ies, 3.3% concerned only International issues, while 10.3% concerned localised issues concerning identifiable communities.

Types of Items

Items were labelled according to different comprehensive programme genres such as political, hard items detailing the events of the day, editorial opinion, and whether:

- Male main anchors covered more types of items [19 types] than female anchors [14 types];
- Females only exceeded males in two types of items: Lifestyle with 1:1.23 females in 38 items and in Economical/Statistical items with 1:1.44 females in 19 items;
- Only three items were presented by females only: Statistics [2 items], Weather [2 items], and Parliament [1 item];
- There were only two items which were presented by males only: one item each on Religion and European Union;
- Males exceeded females most in Investigative [1:15.5 males on 31 items], Editorial Opinion [1:6.5 females on 14 items], Technology [1:3 females on 7 items], Political [1:2.77 females on 213 items], Sports [1:2.75 females on 14 items], Educational [1:2.5 females on 7 items], and Social Issues [1:2.04 females on 132 items];
- On the rest eight items, the ratio between males to females was greater than 1:1 but less than 1:2.

Topic of Items

The topics of the items were very extensive as no item was repeated and/or followed up in a subsequent programme.

- As much as 14.05% [121 items] of the items were Politics or of a Political nature, followed by Legal/Criminal [10.92%; 94 items], and Infrastructure [7.43%, 64 items];
- Total male main anchors presented more items than female main anchors in the ratio of 1:5.5 males;
- *Main Anchors*: While there were 22 topics presented by both female and male main anchors, there were another 22 topics which were presented by male anchors only and 3 topics were presented by females only [Fashion, Awards, and True Events];
- *Secondary Anchors*: There were 25 topics presented by female secondary anchors which there were only 5 items presented by both female and male secondary anchors;
- *Reporters*: 23 topics were presented by both male and female reporters, 8 topics by female reporters only and 3 items by male reporters only;
- *Other Journalists/Commentator*: There were 4 topics presented by male only commentators and 1 item presented by a female only journalist/commentator.

Item Presentation

Seven modes have been identified for the way in which items were presented – the most common being AIV (Announcer in Vision) [48.20%], followed by a Feature [33.91%], AIV & Footage [8.01%], Slides [4.76%], Reuters International Agency Report [3.24%], Archive Footage [1.28%], and Film [0.58%]. Total Male anchors, reporters and journalists [71.43%] exceed female anchors [43.44%] – in the ratio of 1:1.64males.

Anchors, Reporters, and Other Journalists/Commentators

For the presentation of these items quite often more than one anchor was used especially in the case of outside reporting and filming. Taking all the anchors (primary and secondary), reporters and journalists/commentators used male anchors [62.25%] exceeded female anchors [37.75%] – in the ratio of 1:1.65 males.

- *Main Anchors*: Male anchors exceeded female anchors– in the ratio of 1:5.5 males;
- *Secondary Anchors*: Females exceeded male anchors – in the ratio of 1:10.7 females;
- *Reporters*: Females exceeded male reporters – in the ratio of 1:1.39 females;
- *Other Journalists/Commentators*: Males exceeded females – in the ratio of 1:1.6 males.

Analysing anchors by age groups the use of anchors by gender is even more sectarian:

- *Main Anchors*: The number of male main anchors is evenly distributed by age with about $\pm 33\%$ within each age Group [20-34; 35-49; 50-64 years old]. On the other hand, more than two-thirds [67.06%] of female main anchors are between 20-34 years old, 20% are between 50-64 years old, and 12.94% are between 35-49 years old.
- *Secondary Anchors*: While 50% of all male secondary anchors are between 35-49 years old followed by those in the 50-64 year olds [40.0%] and by 20-34 year olds [10.0%], as much as 98.13% of all female secondary anchors were 20-34 year olds, and only 18.6% for both the other age groups.
- *Reporters*: There were no female reporters over the age of 50 years with most of the female reporters being between 20-34 years old [89.44%] while the rest [3.33%] were between 35-49 years old. Male reporters were slightly less – both in total numbers [females: 180; males: 130] as well as a percentage where 77.69% of all male reporters were between 20-34 years old, 13.08% between 35-49 years old, and 0.77% between 50-64 years old.

- *Other Journalists/Commentators:* These were all between 20-34 years old for both female and male journalists.

Guests and Panels

- As much as 53.2% of the items [458 items] included one or more guests for their presentation – the rest [46.8%; 403 items] were presented by the anchor/s, reporters, and/or other journalists;
- Overall, a total of 716 guests were invited where 81.7% were males and 18.3% were females – in the ratio of 1:4.47males.

Number of guests per item:

- *1-Guest Items:* 82.82% were males and 17.18% were females;
- *2-Guest Items:* 59.18% consisted of 2-male panels, 31.63% were gender balanced, and 9.18% consisted of 2-female guests;
- *3-Guest Items:* 72.0% were all male panels, 24% were 2-males and 1-female, and 4% were 2-females and 1-male;
- *4-Guest Items:* 35.39% were gender balanced, 17.65% were 3-male and 1-female panel, and 47.06% had 4-male guests in each item;
- *5-Guest Items:* the only 5-guest item consisted of 1-female and 4-male participants;
- *6-Guest Item:* the only 6-guest item was an all-male participants item.

Guests by Gender and Age:

Nearly a quarter of all guests [24.58%] were between 20-34 years old, as much as 40.08% were between 35-49 years old, just less than a third [30.59%] were 50-59 years old, while less than 1% were 19 years and less [0.98%] and 65+ years old [0.98%].

Analysed by gender and age differences are quite clear – female guests are younger in age than their male counterpart. The largest percent of female guests were in the 20-34 years age Group [F:45.8%; M:19.83%], followed by 35-49 year olds [F:35.11%; M:41.20%], and by 50-64 year olds [13.74%; M:34.36%].

Guests by Occupation and Gender:

Guests were analysed by occupation. Although a quarter [25%] of the participants were politicians this is acceptable due to the nature of the programmes that were monitored. However, the range of occupations was quite extensive. The next highest percent of participants were Administrators [14.39%] and Government Officials [8.1%].

The relationship between female to male guests is highest amongst Business Owner/Partner [1:10 males] followed by Politicians [1:7.95 males], Media People [1:7.75 males], Teacher/Educator [1:6.67 males], Blue Collar Worker/s and Police & Army [both 1:5 males], Diplomats [1:4.71 males], Administrators [1:3.68 males], Artists [1:3males], White Collar Worker/s [1:2.33 males], Entertainers [1:2 males], and Management [1:1.4 males].

All-male guests by occupation included Government representatives [8.1%], Trade Unionist-Employers [2.37%], Trade Unionist-Workers [2.09%], Religious Leader [1.54%], Representative [1.40%], Court representative [1.12%], Sport player [0.28%], and Patient [0.14%].

Guests by Society Label and Gender:

Guests were analysed by what was termed as Society Label – as much as 81.01% of the guests were members of the general public, 6.84% were from people involved in Government and Order, and 5.87% were from the Civil Society, 4.47% were speakers on Victimisation.

- *Government*: 85.71% were males and 14.29% were females – in the ratio of 1:6 males. Females were only registered as political supporters [in the ratio of 1:3 males] and as demonstrators/participants of protests [all females].
- *Civil Society*: 76.19% were males and 23.81% were females – in the ratio of 1:3.2 males. This group included a female Board Director [1:1 male], a female Chief Executive [1:2 males], a female student [1:1 male], and 7 female activity co-ordinators [1:1.8 males].
- *Victimisation*: 81.25% were males and 18.75% were females – in the ratio of 1:4.33 males. The largest section of this group was victims of personal violence/abuse (sexual) [40.63%] and victims of crime (other than sexual) [6.25%] who were all male participants. While relative of the victim [25.0%] were all males, relatives of the accused [6.25%] were all females.

Concluding remarks

These above results were somewhat expected, but not to this extent. In broadcast media the presentation of females always had higher standards than that of males where “character” was sometimes more acceptable on males than on females.

But then the ratios above make a well-defined statement – Broadcast media is male oriented, females take a second role. And this is not only held by broadcasters but also by the public in general.

APPENDIX 3

Linji Gwida bi dħul tad-Direttiva tal-AVMS relatati ma' provvedimenti marbuta ma' reklamar u sponsorship

Proposta lill-Parlament

Reklamar u sponsorship

L-emendi fl-Att dwar ix-Xandir fid-dawl tat-trażpożizzjoni ġabet magħha tibdiliet fir-reklamar u sponsorship fuq livelli differenti, kemm fir-rigward ta' reklamar bħal product placement (tqegħid tal-prodott), pop ups, u sponsorship kif ukoll fir-rigward ta' reklamar kwantitattiv.

Reklamar kwantitattiv

Il-proporzjon ta' spots ta' reklamar televiżiv issa se jibda jiġi kkalkolat fuq żewġ perjodi, wieħed mis-06:00 sas-18:00 u ieħor mis-18:00 sa 00:00. Il-perjodu ta' min-00:00 sas-06:00 mhux se jkun regolat fis-sens li m'hemmx limitu ta' proporzjon ta' kontenut reklamatorju. Fiż-żewġ perjodi rregolati l-proporzjon se jibqa' dak ta' 20% ta' reklamar fuq il-perjodu ta' sigħat imsemmija hawnhekk. Dan ifisser li r-reklamar (spots) issa mhux se jibqa' jiġi kkalkolat skont is-siegħa orarja imma mifrux fuq perjodu ta' sigħat. F'termini aktar sempliċi f'perjodu ta' tnax-il siegħa (06:00 sas-18:00) huwa permessibbli li jkun hemm 144 minuta ta' reklamar filwaqt li bejn il-perjodu ta' sitt sigħat (18:00 sa 00:00) huwa permess 72 minuta ta' reklamar. Dawn il-proporzjonijiet ma jinkludux twieqi ta' teleshopping, avvizi ta' sponsorizzazzjoni, l-inkluzjoni tal-prodotti kummerċjali u l-awtopromozzjoni tal-programmi imma jinkludu u jirreferu għall-pop up advertising u forom oħra ta' reklamar.

Sponsorship

Id-Direttiva tal-AVMS estendiet il-projbizzjoni ta' sponsorship ta' prodotti tat-tabakk minn sigaretti għal sigaretti elettronici u kontenituri ta' rikariki. Ġabet ukoll il-projbizzjoni ta' imprizi li l-għan ewlieni tagħhom huwa l-manifattura jew il-bejgħ ta' sigaretti jew prodotti tat-tabakk.

Dwar l-isponsorship f'ġeneri partikolari ta' programmi, il-projbizzjoni ta' sponsorship baqgħet fis-seħħ fir-rigward ta' programmi ta' ġrajjet kurrenti u aħbarijiet. Tajjeb wieħed jirrimarka li programmi b'aħbarijiet jew analiżi ta' ġrajjet internazzjonali wkoll jitqiesu bħala programmi ta' ġrajjet kurrenti. Barra minn hekk apparti l-programmi reliġjużi li ma jistgħux ikunu sponsored, issa ġiet estiza għas-servizzi reliġjużi wkoll. Mill-banda l-oħra issa se jsir permessibbli li jiġi abbinat sponsor mal-ġeneru ta' dokumentarji u mal-ġeneru ta' programmi tat-tfal b'eċċezzjoni li fi programmi tat-tfal dan l-isponsorship ma jistax ikun ta' ditti jew prodotti ta' ikel li fihom ħafna xaħam, zokkor u melħ (HFSS), jew ta' prodotti li ma jkunux xierqa jew adatti għat-tfal jew li mhux mistennija jixtru jew jippruvaw jixtru.

Pop up advertising

L-emendi fl-Att dwar ix-Xandir ġabu magħhom il-projbizzjoni ta' pop up advertising fl-aħbarijiet, programmi u servizzi reliġjużi. Dan it-tip ta' metodu ta' reklamar jista' jintuza fil-ġeneri ta' programmi oħra.

Tqegħid ta' prodott

Kull użu tat-tqegħid tal-prodott li jmur 'il hinn mid-definizzjoni mogħtija fl-Att dwar ix-Xandir iwassal għall-ksur ta' Artiklu 16K (a) tal-istess Att jew ksur ta' Artiklu 16 M (3) u s-sub regolamenti tiegħu skont il-każ.

Filwaqt li d-Direttiva preċedenti kienet tippermetti biss it-tqegħid ta' prodott permezz ta' deroga, id-Direttiva l-ġdida qed tagħti l-possibbiltà ta' inkluzjoni ta' prodotti kummerċjali fil-ġeneri kollha minbarra fl-aħbarijiet u programmi ta' grajjiet kurrenti, fi programmi tat-tfal, fi programmi u servizzi reliġjużi. It-tqegħid tal-prodott huwa wkoll projbit fi programmi dwar affarijiet tal-konsumatur. Dan ifisser li l-projbizzjoni tat-tqegħid tal-prodott hija projbizzjoni assoluta u ma jista' jkun hemm l-ebda placement, anke jekk dan ikun bla ħlas jew ikun biss bħala forniment ta' servizzi jew prodotti.

Madanakollu l-għoti ta' rigal waqt dawn il-programmi ma jitqiesx li hu tqegħid ta' prodott u jista' jidher li qed jingħata lill-partecipanti jew mistiedna fl-istudjow sakemm ma jkunx jitqies li jkun reklamar b'ingann minħabba l-mod kif dan jiġi pprezentat.

L-erba' elementi li jirregolaw it-tqegħid tal-prodott baqgħu l-istess, għajr għal zieda ta' "*projbizzjoni għal tqegħid tematiku mhux dovut ta' prodotti kummerċjali*". Dan huwa marbut ma' użu ta' prodotti kummerċjali f'kontenut li huwa tematiku u li jkun intrinsikament marbut mal-prodott.

L-avviż tat-tqegħid tal-prodott li huwa permess li jrid jixxandar fil-bidu, fl-aħħar u wara kull waqfa għal reklami. Dan l-avviż irid jidher fil-programmi kollha għajr dawk li għandhom il-projbizzjoni jew dawk li ma jagħmlux użu minn din it-teknika ta' reklamar.

Fir-rigward ta' aħbarijiet u programmi ta' grajjiet kurrenti, fi programmi tat-tfal, fi programmi u servizzi reliġjużi ma jistax jintuża l-ebda forma ta' tqegħid ta' prodott inkluz prodotti u servizzi bħala forniment ta' ċerti prodotti jew servizzi mingħajr ħlas anke jekk dawn jintużaw għall-armar ta' produzzjoni, jew li jgħinu l-produzzjoni jew id-dehra tal-prezentatur.

Fil-każ ta' tqegħid ta' prodott li huwa regolat bil-ħin, żdiedu l-prodotti jew servizzi relatati mat-tatwaġġ. Dawn żdiedu ma' prodotti ta' alkoħol u logħob tal-azzard.

Reklamar - Projbizzjoni ta' prodotti jew regolamentazzjoni ta' tip ta' kontenut ta' reklamar

Minn aspetti ta' komunikazzjoni kummerċjali awdjovizivi hemm ukoll il-projbizzjoni ta' kull forma ta' reklamar għal sigaretti u prodotti oħra tat-tabakk kif ukoll ta' sigaretti elettronici u kontenituri ta' rikarika. Dan jirrifletti wkoll il-projbizzjoni ta' prodotti bħal dawn fir-rigward ta' sponsorship imsemmijin aktar 'il fuq fl-istess dokument.

Hemm ukoll elementi oħra ta' kontenut ta' reklamar partikolarment fir-rigward ta' reklamar għal alkoħol. Hemm numru ta' kriterji ta' kif il-komunikazzjonijiet kummerċjali awdjovizivi għal xorb alkoħoliku jridu jkunu konformi ma' kontenut partikolari, fosthom li ma jstgħux ikunu immirati lejn il-minuri għall-konsum tagħhom, li ma jgħaqqdux il-konsum tal-alkoħol mas-sewqan, li m'għandhomx joħolqu l-impressjoni li l-konsum tal-alkoħol jikkontribwixxi għas-suċċess soċjali jew sesswali, li m'għandux jingħad li l-alkoħol għandu kwalitajiet terapewtiċi jew stimulant, li m'għandhomx jinkoraġġixxu konsum immoderat tal-alkoħol u m'għandhomx jagħmlu enfasi li l-kontenut alkoħoliku fix-xorb huwa kwalità pozzittiva. Dawn il-kriterji diġà jinsabu wkoll fil-Legizlazzjoni Sussidjarja 350.24 –

Ħtiġijiet dwar ir-Reklami, Metodi ta' Reklamar u Direttivi dwar Reklamar, Sponsorship u Teleshopping ta' Xorb Alkoħoliku.

Hemm ukoll il-projbizzjoni ta' reklamar ta' prodotti ta' ikel u xorb li fihom ammont ta' xaħam, zokkor u melħ (HFSS products) qabel, waqt u minnufih wara programmi għat-tfal.

Konkluzjoni

Dawn il-linji gwida jkopri tibdiliet u aspetti li għabet magħha d-Direttiva tal-AVMS f'aspetti reklamatorji fuq is-servizzi tal-midja.

Dr Joanna Spiteri
Kap Eżekuttiv

Randolph Micallef
Kap Dipartiment tal-Monitoring

24 ta' Novembru 2020

APPENDIX 4

List of Circulars issued by the Broadcasting Authority in 2020

Number	Title	Date
[01/20]	Xandir marbut mal-perjodu tal-pandemija tal-Coronavirus	17/03/2020
[02/20]	Ripetizzjonijiet ta' programmi	26/03/2020
[03/20]	Għargħur Tower switch off – Saturday 23rd May 2020	21/05/2020
[04/20]	Għargħur Tower switch off – Friday 5th June 2020	04/06/2020
[05/20]	Stem cells treatment	17/06/2020
[06/20]	Għargħur Tower Switch Off	14/07/2020
[07/20]	Għargħur Tower Switch Off	29/07/2020
[08/20]	Għargħur Tower Switch Off	28/08/2020
[09/20]	Online Training Session: Enhancing Broadcasting: an overview	01/10/2020
[10/20]	Telexiri	15/10/2020
[11/20]	L-Ilsien Malti fil-Mezzi tax-Xandir	16/10/2020
[12/20]	Xogħlijiet fuq it-Torri tal-Għargħur	30/10/2020

List of Press Releases issued by the Broadcasting Authority in 2020

Number	Title	Date
[01/20]	Audience Assessment November 2019	09/01/2020
[02/20]	Courtesy visit by the BA to H.E. President George Vella	24/01/2020
[03/20]	Iċ-Ċertifikat fil-Qari tal-Provi bil-Malti	17/02/2020
[04/20]	Xandir dwar il-COVID-19	13/03/2020
[05/20]	Konsultazzjoni Pubblika dwar Emendi fil-Liġi tax-Xandir, Kap. 350	12/05/2020
[06/20]	Qtugħ fit-trażmissjoni – Is-Sibt 23 ta' Mejju 2020	21/05/2020
[07/20]	Qtugħ fit-trażmissjoni – Il-Ġimgħa 5 ta' Ġunju 2020	04/06/2020
[08/20]	Audience Assessment March 2020	17/06/2020
[09/20]	Qtugħ fit-trażmissjoni – Is-Sibt 25 ta' Lulju, is-Sibt 1 ta' Awwissu u l-Ħadd 2 ta' Awwissu 2020	22/07/2020
[10/20]	Qtugħ fit-trażmissjoni – Is-Sibt 1 ta' Awwissu 2020	29/07/2020
[11/20]	Stqarrija għall-Istampa – 19 ta' Awwissu 2020	19/08/2020
[12/20]	Qtugħ fit-trażmissjoni – 28 ta' Settembru 2020	28/09/2020
[13/20]	Audience Assessment July 2020	08/10/2020
[14/20]	Cordial Visit by the BA to the Archbishop Mons Charles Jude Scicuna	19/10/2020
[15/20]	Xogħlijiet fuq it-Torri tal-Għargħur	02/11/2020
[16/20]	L-Awtorità tax-Xandir toffri sponsor għat-30 Edizzjoni tal-Malta Journalism Awards	09/11/2020
[17/20]	Rappurtagġ dwar ħruq fl-Uffiċji tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir	28/11/2020
[18/20]	Notifika dwar tibdil fl-Audience Assessment tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir	01/12/2020

Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2020

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 December 2020

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Authority Board report

The members of the Authority Board present their report, together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Principal activity

The Broadcasting Authority was established under the Broadcasting Ordinance XX of 1961 on 29 September 1961 – later incorporated in Articles 118 and 119 of the Constitution of Malta. It operates under the provisions of the Broadcasting Act, Chapter 350 of the Laws of Malta to exercise regulatory functions regarding sound and television broadcasting services in Malta and to issue licenses for the provisions of such services in accordance with said Act.

Review of business development and financial position

The financial position of the authority as at 31 December 2020 is disclosed on page 9, while the results for the year under review are disclosed on page 10.

The Authority registered a small surplus (after depreciation) of € 22,614 for the year ended 2020 compared to a surplus of € 54,569 for the previous year. The decrease in surplus was due to an aggregate decrease in revenue of € 27,483 and a slight increase in expenditure € 4,472.

Income

Income from Radio and Licence fees increased by € 9,510 mainly due to a new licence for a Digital Radio Service and some new Drive-In Cinema applications.

Income from TV Application and Licence fees has decreased by € 12,815. During 2020 there were no renewal applications for TV Stations while two Satellite TV stations have ceased to operate and returned their licences.

Income from Penalties has also decreased by € 24,479 over the previous year.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased slightly overall by a net of € 4,472 over the previous year.

The Authority does not have any liabilities exceeding one year while those liabilities falling within one year are mainly non-financial contractual maturities.

The financial position of the authority as at 31 December 2020 is disclosed on page 9, while the results for the year under review are disclosed on page 10.

Authority Board report - *continued*

Events during the reporting year

Since early 2020, the world is suffering from a widespread Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in disruptions to businesses worldwide. The uncertainty surrounding the duration of this situation is making the way towards recovery unclear.

The crisis has not resulted in the temporary cessation in the Authority's activities. The overall impact of COVID-19 on the Authority is therefore expected to be relatively contained in the context of the Authority's financial resources and accordingly the Authority Board consider it to be appropriate to prepare these financial statements on a going concern basis.

The Authority is committed to upgrade the Gharghur Transmitting Site facilities and refurbish its main Offices in Hamrun. Preliminary studies have been commissioned on the Health of the Tower Structure and other Transmitting Equipment. The Site itself will be upgraded to include the guardroom and other buildings. New systems will also be installed to render the site more safe and secure. Renovation projects have also started on the main offices to modernise the premises to meet the Authority's current and future requirements. During the year a Head of ICT and Projects has been employed to oversee the various projects.

Future developments

As stated earlier studies on the Tower Structure have already been concluded and is moving forward to implementation stage. The Authority will be using its cash reserves to carry out the basic and urgent repairs and to commence a string of other minor upgrading projects for the site. The cash reserves will not be sufficient to complete all the planned projects and further substantial Government funding is being sought. Successful conclusion of all the proposed projects depends entirely on securing the required additional Government funding.

Surplus of Funds

The surplus for the year amounted to €22,614 and is being carried forward to the next financial year.

Authority

The persons responsible for these financial statements are

Mr. Frank V. Farrugia – Chairperson
Dr. Joanna Spiteri – Chief Executive Officer
Dr. Alessandro Lia – Member
Mr. Francis Ghirxi – Member
Dr. Peter Fenech – Member
Mr. Charlo' Bonnici – Member
Dr. Simon Manicolo – Board Secretary

Authority Board report - continued

Statement of the Authority Board's responsibilities

The Authority is governed by a Board consisting of Chairperson and four members. Their responsibility is to prepare financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Authority at the end of each financial year and of the gain or loss for the year then ended. In preparing the financial statements, the Authority:

- Selects suitable accounting policies and applies them consistently;
- Makes judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- Prepares the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is appropriate to presume that the Authority will not continue in business

The Authority is responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and to enable it to ensure that the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The Authority is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Authority and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.


The Authority is responsible to ensure that it establishes and maintains internal control to provide reasonable assurance with regard to reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

In determining which controls to implement to prevent and detect fraud, management considers the risks that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

Auditor

The auditor, Mr. Charles Scerri, has intimated his willingness to continue in office. A resolution proposing his re-appointment will be put before the members during the Broadcasting Authority Board Meeting of the month of March, 2021.

Approved by the Authority's representatives on 8 April 2021 and signed on its behalf by:


Mr. Frank Farrugia
Chairperson


Dr. Joanna Spiteri
Chief Executive Officer

Registered office:
7,
Mile End Street,
Hamrun, HMR 1719,
Malta.

CHARLES SCERRI

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the Broadcasting Authority

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

In my opinion:

- Broadcasting Authority's financial statements (the "financial statements") give a true and fair view of the Authority's financial position as at 31 December 2020, and of the Authority's financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards ('IFRSs') as adopted by the EU; and
- The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Maltese Broadcasting Act (Cap. 350).

What I have audited

Broadcasting Authority's financial statements, set out on pages 9 to 25, comprise:

- the Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2020;
- the Income statement for the Authority;
- the Statement of changes in equity;
- the Statement of cash flows; and
- the Notes to the financial statements, which include a summary of significant accounting policies.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Independence

I am independent of the Authority in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements of the Accountancy Profession (Code of Ethics for Warrant Holders) Directive issued in terms of the Accountancy Profession Act (Cap. 281) that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Malta. I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these Codes.

CHARLES SCERRI

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT - continued

To the Members of the Broadcasting Authority

Other information

The Board Members are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's report thereon.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, including the Board Members' report.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

With respect to the Board Members' report, I considered whether the Board Members' report includes the disclosures required the Maltese Broadcasting Act (cap. 350).

Based on the work I have performed, in my opinion:

- the information given in the Board Members' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Board Members' report has been prepared in accordance with the Maltese Broadcasting Act (Cap. 350).

In addition, in light of the knowledge and understanding of the Authority and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I am required to report if I have identified material misstatements in the Board Members' report and other information. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Board Members for the financial statements

The Board Members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the EU and the requirements of the of the Maltese Broadcasting Act (Cap.350) for such internal control as the Board Members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatements, whether to due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements the Board Members are responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the members either intend to liquidate the Authority or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

CHARLES SCERRI

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT - continued

To the Members of the Broadcasting Authority

Auditor's responsibility for the audit of the financial statements

My objectives is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board Members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board Members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular, it is difficult to evaluate all of the potential implications that COVID-19 will have on the authority's trade, customers and suppliers, and the disruption to its business and the overall economy.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Authority to express an opinion on the financial statements. I am responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit. I remain solely responsible for my audit opinion.

I communicate with the Board Members regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

CHARLES SCERRI

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT - continued
To the Members of the Broadcasting Authority

Report on other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

I also have responsibilities under the Maltese Broadcasting Act (Cap.350) to report to you if, in my opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or that returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by us.
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.
- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for the audit.

I have nothing to report to you in respect of these responsibilities.


Charles Scerri
Certified Public Accountant

The Penthouse, Carolina Court, Giuseppe Cali Street, Ta' Xbiex XBX 1425

8 April 2021

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

Statement of financial position
As at 31 December

	Notes	2020 €	2019 €
ASSETS			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	3	1,911,149	1,957,980
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	4	286,773	272,625
Cash and cash equivalents	5	720,597	679,176
		1,007,370	951,801
Total assets		2,918,519	2,909,781
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Capital fund		2,572,739	2,572,737
Reserve fund		37,270	37,270
Revaluation reserve		293,699	293,699
Accumulated reserve		(156,490)	(179,104)
		2,747,218	2,724,602
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	6	171,301	185,179
Total equity and liabilities		2,918,519	2,909,781

The financial statements on pages 9 to 25 were approved and signed by the Board Members on 8 April 2021:



Mr. Frank Farrugia
Chairman



Dr. Joanna Spiteri
Chief Executive Officer

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

Income statement
Year ended 31 December

	Notes	2020 €	2019 €
Revenue	8	990,342	1,018,126
Administrative expenses		(968,897)	(964,425)
Other income		303	-
Operating profit		21,748	53,701
Finance income	9	866	868
Surplus for the year	10	<u>22,614</u>	<u>54,569</u>

The notes on pages 13 to 25 are an integral part of these financial statements.

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

Statement of changes in equity
Year ended 31 December

	Accumulated fund €
At 1 January 2020	(179,104)
Surplus for the year	22,614
At 31 December 2020	(156,490)
	=====
At 1 January 2019	(233,673)
Surplus for the year	54,569
At 31 December 2019	(179,104)
	=====

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

31 December 2020

Statement of cash flows

Year ended 31 December

	Note	2020 €	2019 €
Cash flows from operating activities			
Surplus for the year		22,614	54,569
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation		69,041	70,225
Movements in working capital for:			
Trade and other receivables		(14,148)	405
Trade and other payables		(13,880)	4,599
		-----	-----
Net cash generated from operating activities		63,627	129,798
		-----	-----
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments to acquire property, plant and equipment		(22,206)	(86,401)
Proceeds on disposal of property, plant and equipment		-	590
		-----	-----
Net cash used in investing activities		(22,206)	(85,811)
		-----	-----
Movement in cash and cash equivalents		41,421	43,987
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		679,176	635,189
		-----	-----
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	5	720,597	679,176
		=====	=====

Notes to the financial statements

1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Statement of compliance

In view of the current situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority has planned well, and was able to carry out its business unhindered. On this basis, the Authority Board has assessed that the Authority is expected to have the necessary funds to finance its operations and commitments towards employees, creditors and banks. Accordingly, the Board continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the Authority's financial statements and considers that there are no material uncertainties which may cast doubt about the ability of the Authority to continue operating as a going concern.

These financial statements have been prepared and presented in accordance with the provisions of the International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the EU (IFRSs) with the requirements of the Malta Broadcasting Act (Cap. 350).

The effects of Covid-19 on our audit

Since early 2020, the world is suffering from a widespread Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in disruptions to businesses worldwide. The uncertainty surrounding the duration of this situation is making the way towards recovery unclear.

The crisis has not resulted in the temporary cessation in the Authority's activities. The overall impact of COVID-19 on the Authority is therefore expected to be relatively contained in the context of the Authority's financial resources and accordingly the Authority Board consider it to be appropriate to prepare these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards during the current financial year

During the current financial year, the Authority adopted new standards, amendments and interpretations to existing standards that are mandatory for the Authority's accounting period beginning on 1 January 2020. The adoption of these revisions to the requirements of IFRSs as adopted by the EU did not result in substantial changes to the Authority's accounting policies.

Standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards that are not yet adopted

Certain new standards, amendments and interpretations to existing standards have been published by the date of authorisation for issue of these financial statements but are mandatory for the Authority. The Authority has not early adopted these revisions to the requirements of IFRSs as adopted by the EU and the Authority's Board is of the opinion that, there are no requirements that will have a possible significant impact on the Authority's financial statements in the period of initial application.

1 Basis of preparation - continued

1.2 Basis of measurement

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost basis.

1.3 Functional and presentation currency

The financial statements are presented in Euro, which is the Authority's functional currency.

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated to the functional currency of the Authority at exchange rates at the dates of the transactions. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies at the reporting date are retranslated to the functional currency at the exchange rate at that date. The foreign currency gain or loss on monetary items is the difference between amortised cost in the functional currency at the beginning of the year, adjusted for effective interest and payments during the year, and the amortised cost in foreign currency translated at the exchange rate at the end of the year. Foreign currency differences arising on retranslation are recognised in profit or loss.

2 Significant accounting policies

The accounting policies set out below have been applied consistently to all years presented in these financial statements.

2.1 Financial assets, financial liabilities and equity

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised on the Authority's statement of financial position when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognised at their fair value plus in the case of financial assets and financial liabilities not classified as held for trading and subsequently measured at fair value, transaction costs attributable to the acquisition or issue of the financial assets and financial liabilities.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are derecognised if and to the extent that, it is no longer probable that any future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to or from the entity.

An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the Authority after deducting all of its liabilities. Equity instruments are recorded at the proceeds received, net of direct issue costs.

A financial instrument, or its component parts, is classified as a financial liability, financial asset or an equity instrument in accordance with the substance of the contractual arrangement rather than its legal form.

2 Significant accounting policies - continued

2.2 Financial assets

For the purpose of subsequent measurement, financial assets of the Authority are classified into loans and receivables upon recognition.

All income and expenses relating to loans and receivables are presented within 'finance cost', 'finance income', or 'other financial items', except for impairment of trade receivables which is presented within 'other expenses'.

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. After initial recognition these are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Discounting is omitted where the effect of discounting is immaterial. The Authority's cash and cash equivalents, trade and most other receivables fall into this category of financial instruments.

Individually significant receivables are considered for impairment when they are past due or when other objective evidence is received that a specific counterparty will default. Receivables that are not considered to be individually impaired are reviewed for impairment in groups, which are determined by reference to the industry and region of a counterparty and other available features of shared credit risk characteristics. The percentage of the write down is then based on recent historical default rates for each identified group.

2.3 Financial liabilities

The Authority's financial liabilities include trade and other payables. These are stated at their nominal amount which is a reasonable approximation of fair value.

All interest-related charges are included within 'finance costs' or 'finance income'.

2.4 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

2 Significant accounting policies - continued

2.5 Impairment

The carrying amounts of the Authority's assets are reviewed at each end of reporting year to determine whether there is any indication of impairment. If any such indication exists, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated.

Whenever the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised and the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount. Impairment losses are recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless they relate to an asset which is carried at revalued amount, in which case they are treated as a revaluation decrease.

The carrying amounts of the Authority's assets are also reviewed at each end of reporting year to determine whether there is any indication that an impairment loss recognised in prior years may no longer exist or may have decreased. If any such indication exists, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated. An impairment loss previously recognised is reversed only if there has been a change in the estimates used to determine the asset's recoverable amount since the last impairment loss was recognised.

When an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount, to the extent that it does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in prior years. Impairment reversals are recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless they relate to an asset which is carried at revalued amount, in which case they are treated as a revaluation increase.

2.6 Property, plant and equipment

Recognition and measurement

Property, plant and equipment, are initially recorded at cost and are subsequently stated at cost less depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount, or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Authority, and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the Statement of Income, during the financial year in which they are incurred.

2 Significant accounting policies - continued

2.6 Property, plant and equipment - continued

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets on a straight line basis over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned having regard to their residual value. The annual rates used for this purpose, which are applied consistently, are:

	%
Buildings	1
Motor vehicles	20
Studio equipment	20
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	10-20
Technical equipment	25
Transmitting antenna	4-12

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each end of the reporting year.

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no future economic benefits are expected to arise from the continued use of asset. Any gains or losses arising on the disposal or retirement of property, plant and equipment are determined as the difference between the disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset and are recognised in the Income Statement within the other income or administrative and other expenses.

2.7 Non-derivative financial instruments

Non-derivative financial instruments comprise investments in equity and debt securities, trade and other receivables, cash and cash equivalents, loans and borrowings, and trade and other payables.

Non-derivative financial instruments are recognised initially at fair value. Subsequent to initial recognition non-derivative financial instruments are measured as described below.

A financial instrument is recognised if the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets are derecognised if the Authority's contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial assets expire or if the Authority transfers the financial asset to another party without retaining control or substantially all risks and rewards of the asset. Regular way purchases and sales of financial assets are accounted for at trade date, i.e., the date that the Authority commits itself to purchase or sell the asset. Financial liabilities are derecognised if the Authority's obligations specified in the contract expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2 Significant accounting policies - continued

2.8 Reserves

The accumulated reserves includes all current and prior period retained surpluses and deficits.

2.9 Revenue

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable by the Authority for services provided. Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the Authority and these can be measured reliably.

- The following specific recognition criteria must also be met before revenue is recognised:
- The Authority has transferred to the buyer the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the services provided. This is generally when the customer has approved the services that have been provided;
- The amount of revenue can be measured reliably;
- It is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Authority; and
- The costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably.

Income from government subvention is recognised on an accrual basis.

- Government grants and EU grants are not recognised until there is a reasonable assurance that the Authority will comply with the conditions attaching to them and that the grants will be received.
- Government grants and EU grants are recognised in the Income Statement on a systematic basis over the years in which the Authority recognises as expenses the related costs for which the grants are intended to compensate.
- Government grants and EU grants related to assets are presented in the Statement of Financial Position by setting up the grant as deferred income and is recognised in the Income Statement on a systematic basis over the useful life of the asset.
- Government grants and EU grants that are receivable as compensation for expenses or losses already incurred or for the purposes of giving immediate financial support to the Authority with no future related costs are recognised in the Income Statement in the year in which they become receivable.

Interest income

- Interest is accrued on a time basis, by reference to the principal outstanding and at the effective interest rate applicable, which is the rate that exactly discounts the estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset to the asset's net carrying amount.

2.10 Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assume that the Authority will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

3 Property, plant and equipment

Cost	Freehold land	Buildings & improvements	Transmitting antenna	Fixtures & fittings	Technical equipment	Studio equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
As at 1 January 2020	160,270	1,862,680	848,153	520,973	137,027	161,057	56,850	3,747,010
Additions	-	-	257	20,390	1,559	-	-	22,206
Disposals	-	-	(25,080)	-	-	-	-	(25,080)
As at 31 December 2020	160,270	1,862,680	823,330	541,263	138,586	161,057	56,850	3,744,136
Depreciation								
As at 1 January 2020	-	449,355	521,889	493,283	128,976	161,057	34,470	1,789,030
Charge for the year	-	18,627	25,802	11,583	4,245	-	8,780	69,037
Disposals	-	-	(25,080)	-	-	-	-	(25,080)
As at 31 December 2020	-	467,978	522,611	504,866	133,225	161,057	43,250	1,832,987
Net book Value as at 31 December 2020	160,270	1,394,702	300,770	36,446	5,361	-	13,600	1,911,149
Net book Value as at 31 December 2019	160,270	1,413,325	326,264	27,690	8,051	-	22,380	1,957,980

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

4 Trade and other receivables	2020	2019
	€	€
Trade receivables	298,009	293,067
Less: allowance for doubtful debts	(38,152)	(41,827)
	<u>259,857</u>	<u>251,240</u>
Accrued income	371	9,785
Prepayments	26,545	11,600
	<u>286,773</u>	<u>272,625</u>
	=====	=====
5 Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents consist of the following:		
	2020	2019
	€	€
Cash at bank	<u>720,597</u>	<u>679,176</u>
	=====	=====
6 Trade and other payables		
	2020	2019
	€	€
Deferred income	139,476	141,075
Accruals	31,825	44,101
	<u>171,301</u>	<u>185,176</u>
	=====	=====

7 Taxation

With reference to the Broadcasting Act, Part 9 article 39 sub-article 2, Government subventions are deemed to be exempt from any liability for the payment of income tax and duty on documents. Hence no taxation was recognised in these financial statements given the Authority's main source of income is from Government subventions.

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

8 Revenue	2020	2019
	€	€
Government subvention	583,000	583,000
Master Antenna Facility Fees	60,554	60,554
Radio License Fees	157,297	141,772
Radio Application Fees	1,509	7,524
TV Application Fees	-	5,800
TV License Fees	129,505	136,520
Transmitter Rents Receivable	46,727	46,727
Penalties income	11,750	36,229
	<u>990,342</u>	<u>1,018,126</u>

9 Finance income	2020	2019
	€	€
Bank interest	866	868
	<u>866</u>	<u>868</u>

10 Surplus for the year

The surplus for the year is stated after charging the following:

	2020	2019
	€	€
Audit fee	1,769	1,888
Depreciation	69,041	70,373
Board Members' and board secretary's compensation	116,033	106,853
Wages and salaries	550,641	545,323
	<u>737,484</u>	<u>764,437</u>

Staff costs incurred during the year are analysed as follows:

	2020	2019
	€	€
Board members' honoraria	68,755	61,363
Board secretary's salary	36,265	45,490
Wages and salaries	519,297	505,826
	<u>624,317</u>	<u>612,679</u>
Social security contributions	42,357	39,497
	<u>666,674</u>	<u>652,176</u>

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

31 December 2020

10 Surplus for the year - continued

The average number of persons employed during the year, including board members was made up as follows:

	2020	2019
	No	No
Board members	5	5
Operations	23	22
	-----	-----
	28	27
	=====	=====

11 Financial risk management

The Authority is exposed to a variety of financial risks: market risk (including currency risk, fair value interest rate risk and price risk), credit risk and liquidity risk. The Authority's risk management is coordinated by the Board members and focuses on actively securing the Authority's short to medium term cash flows by minimising the exposure to financial risk.

11.1 Foreign currency risk

The Authority is not significantly exposed to foreign currency risk since most of its transactions are carried out in Euro.

11.2 Interest risk

The Authority is not exposed to interest risk on its payables since these are all interest free.

11.3 Credit risk

The Authority's exposure to credit risk is limited to the carrying amount of financial assets recognised at the end of the reporting year, as summarised below;

	Notes	2020	2019
		€	€
Classes of financial assets – carrying amounts			
Trade and other receivables	4	286,773	272,625
Cash and cash equivalents	5	720,597	679,176
		-----	-----
		1,007,370	951,801
		=====	=====

The Authority's Board members consider that all the above financial assets for each of the reporting dates under review are of good credit quality.

None of the Authority's financial assets are secured by collateral or other credit enhancements.

11 Financial risk management – continued

11.3 Credit risk - continued

In respect of trade and other receivables, the Authority is not exposed to any significant credit risk exposure to any single counterparty. The credit risk for liquid funds is considered negligible, since the counterparties are reputable banks with high quality external credit ratings.

11.4 Liquidity risk

The Authority's exposure to liquidity risk arises from its obligations to meet its financial liabilities, which comprise of trade and other payables. Prudent liquidity risk management includes maintaining sufficient cash and committed credit facilities to ensure the availability of an adequate amount of funding to meet the Authority's obligations when they become due.

The Authority ensures a steady and healthy cash flow through persistent chasing of debtors on a weekly basis to ensure that target inflows are received monthly. Targets are set by management and are monitored through continuous cashflow analysis with the financial controller.

The Authority's financial liabilities at the reporting date under review are all short term and their contractual maturities fall within one year.

12 Commitments

Commitments to Capital expenditure

Contracted for but not provided:-

	€
New Generator at Gharghur Transmitting Site	27,730
New electrical Automatic Switch Changeovers and ancillary works	28,851
New Apertures for BA Main Offices	55,671

13 Comparative information

Comparative figures disclosed in the main components of these financial statements have been reclassified to conform with the current year's presentation format for the purpose of fairer presentation.

14 Statutory information

The Broadcasting Authority was established under the Broadcasting Ordinance XX of 1961. The registered office is 7, Mile End Street, Hamrun HMR 1719.

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

Detailed income statement

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 €	2019 €
Income	990,645	1,018,126
Administrative and other expenses		
Technical assistance	230	552
TV political broadcasts	-	6,008
Wages and salaries – Monitoring department	261,556	271,227
Wages and salaries – Tech department	16,440	-
Wages and salaries – Administration department	319,923	319,586
Honoraria to board	68,755	61,363
Repairs and maintenance	19,191	10,295
Staff training	2,180	1,752
Sundry expenses	8,032	8,182
Advertising	5,407	223
Audience research	22,184	30,444
Audit fees	1,785	1,904
Bank charges	294	301
BA reports & publications	1,111	840
Duty visits abroad	1,018	11,652
Gratuities to staff	178	-
Membership fees	3,600	3,400
Insurance of effects	5,519	5,421
Legal & professional fees	19,843	8,239
Health schemes	23,041	19,187
Subscriptions	8,150	9,532
Public relations	3,021	4,290
Stationery	8,286	7,206
Telecommunications	11,254	10,791
Transport	6,079	6,738
Uniforms	436	188
Conferences	1,277	9,911
Water and electricity	21,103	17,606
Security services	35,465	38,584
Gharghur site expenses	20,304	29,993
Gharghur tower maintenance	5,369	-
Sub-committee research costs	-	3,225
IGM award sponsorship	2,500	5,200
Depreciation	69,041	70,372
Increase in provision for bad debts	(3,675)	(9,873)
Disposal of assets	-	86
	(968,897)	(964,425)

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
31 December 2020

Detailed income and expenditure statement

For the year ended 31 December 2020 (Cont'd)

	2020	2019
	€	€
Finance income	866	868
	-----	-----
Surplus for the year	22,614	54,569
	=====	=====

