

The broadcasting for minors...

The EBU radio project called "Europe - The Common Home" contains a short but distinct picture of the phenomenon that we are discussing to day. It mentions in particular, that in the 20th century "in the wake of the frequent wars and national boundary changes many individuals, groups and even whole nations were forced to leave their traditional home. Many fled their native land or left it for better living and settled in other countries to live and work in a new environment. Others have formed for centuries a recognized "minority group" or "ethnic communities" within long established nation states".

The end of the cold war and globalization caused an intense increase in people's mobility. Alongside with the long established minors group we can see now newly emerged communities as a result of the latest waves of immigration. The modern structure of the minor's communities is becoming more stratified and diverse due to global changes and governmental complicated and sometimes dubious regulations.

Growing manifestation of some tendencies in communities' psychology that are forming new listeners' expectations marks the beginning of our century. These expectations are expanding and possessing a serious challenge to the public broadcasting system and for the society at large. What are they?

In our days we are dealing with the two major audience interest criteria:

01. Strive for ethno-cultural identification at the local level (place of living.) An important detail: there are obvious differences between "immigrant" and "old citizenship approach". Immigration (new minors) is more sensible to the political and economic news from their motherland.

While nationals, who got citizenship long ago are requiring more of a cultural connection with their origin. Most of them are older or middle aged. Community perception is naturally prevailing in this group, which favors the ethnical broadcasting, rather than the multicultural channel format.

The growing desire of ethnical minorities to be represented in the mainstream broadcastings being revealed:

- especially amongst the national elites, who have been already incorporated into the society;
- the younger generation of minors, who see their future in the context of their present existence in the particular country?
- and of course this applies predominantly to the generations born in the new cultural surroundings and normally the representatives of the historically established national minorities).

Within modern society this is an expanding group, which is specifically sensible to any kind of stereotypical, negative coverage of their national portrayals. They regard it as detrimental to their professional career, self-identification as of equal citizens and to the future of their children.

The attitude of this group is more positive towards multicultural channels practice. But the expectations of this stratum are broader. The research done for the BBC, the Broadcasting Standards Commission and the Radio Authority shows that specialized programmes are appreciated, but there is a growing demand for representation in news and documentaries within mainstream broadcasting.

The role of the PBS will look even more difficult if we take into account the attitudes of the title nation, the majority.

The more so that this majority itself is not homogeneous in assessments. Thus young white respondents said in the mentioned research said that more effort should be made to achieve fairer representation on the air, feeling that it might be divisive to have programmes aimed at particular communities.

Older white respondents, on the other hand, were less concerned with the way minority groups were represented on mainstream broadcasting, arguing that there were special services available to meet their needs.

Now when radio is moving in the digital era it seems it will get more opportunities for setting special targeted content. Digitalization will bring more channels of high quality, and at the same time will contribute to a transformation from "broadcasting" to "narrow" niche -casting. This development can cause apprehensions that it will not serve the process of

social integration of minorities, who on their part may regard this as a kind of information ghetto.

Each multicultural society has accumulated some practices and traditions. The old community approach -ethnic radio covering a particular area is considered as not enough by many representatives of minorities nowadays. They feel better presentation on the mainstream broadcasting would help towards creating a greater sense of belonging within society, fostering understanding of the different cultures among other communities, allowing children to see themselves represented positively.

The multicultural channels, when slots of time-schedule are given to different communities are becoming more popular in the big cities, especially mega polices. In the eyes of social experts this format is preferable for the society. Indeed the format speaks for itself presenting an ideal model of coexistence of cultures and languages in one channel.

The licensing and legal regulations can differ from country to country from region to region. Actually the first ever legally binding document on minority rights, stipulates that "in the legal framework of sound radio and TV -broadcasting the state parties shall ensure, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media, and that the corresponding licensing system must be non-discriminatory and based on objective criteria". ("The Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities")

"Nations - are the wealth of the mankind, its universal personalities; even minor of the minors have there own color and place in the God's pattern. "

Broadcasters can well serve this universal project.

Armen Oganessian
Chairman
"Voice of Russia"