

Tom Chivers  
May 2026

# At the Cliff-Edge

*Public Service Broadcasting  
in the United Kingdom*

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# Context and purposes – The UK’s public service media ‘ecology’

The modern era of UK public service media (PSM)<sup>1</sup> began with the Communications Act 2003 and its creation of the statutory media regulator Ofcom. Amongst its suite of responsibilities for media and telecommunications, Ofcom regulates the UK’s five designated public service broadcasters (PSBs) – the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and the Welsh-language channel S4C<sup>2</sup> – by issuing quotas and requirements to provide public service audiovisual content in e.g. news, children’s programming or original content produced in UK regions outside of London.

Ofcom is required to report to the UK Government on how well the PSBs have fulfilled the overarching purposes of PSM as set out in legislation. Until the Media Act 2024 (passed by the previous Conservative government, see below) significantly reduced and narrowed these purposes, the PSB remit was a comprehensive list of genres and ideal outcomes closely associated with the democratising ethos of PSM, including:

- free-to-air services and programmes that meet the needs and interests of all audiences;
- facilitating “civic understanding and fair and well-informed debate on news and current affairs”;
- providing educational programmes and those dealing with science, religion, social issues and matters of international significance;
- ensuring that “cultural activity in the United Kingdom, and its diversity, are reflected, supported and stimulated” through drama, comedy, music and other creative arts;
- reflecting the communities, cultures and identities of the UK; and
- providing high quality and original programmes for children and young people.<sup>3</sup>

The Communications Act also grants benefits to PSBs, such as reserved use of the broadcasting spectrum or (for the BBC and S4C) guarantees of public funding. This ‘carrots and sticks’ approach helps compensate PSBs for taking on non-commercial obligations, and it ensures PSM content is widely available and accessible to all UK audiences. The UK’s PSM model has thus been described as a ‘mixed ecology’,<sup>4</sup> in which the publicly-funded, publicly-owned and commercial publicly-regulated broadcasters jointly provide a wide choice of free-to-air public purpose content that creates value for British society, culture and democracy. UK PSBs, it is further argued, engage in a “competition for quality”,<sup>5</sup> rather than a direct competition for funding or audiences, making the individual remits of each broadcaster more distinct and effective.

1 This briefing uses *Public Service Media* (PSM) to refer to the organisations, regulations and principles that seek to provide public purpose audiovisual media content across television, radio and online formats. This briefing also uses *Public Service Broadcasters* (PSBs) to refer to the five UK broadcasting companies that are formally designated as the primary producers of PSM content and services.

2 S4C = *Sianel Pedwar Cymru*, lit. Channel 4 Wales.

3 See *Communications Act 2003, Section 264* as originally legislated in July 2003.

4 Ofcom (2018) *Public service broadcasting in the digital age*. 8 March 2018

5 Chivers, T. and Allan, S. (2022) *What is the public value of public service broadcasting?* Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre, January 2022

# Funding – Death by a thousand cuts

While many factors have upset the delicate balance of the UK's PSB ecology, its collapsing financial base is the biggest contributor to the erosion of UK PSM output.

The BBC's main source of its £5.9bn income (FY2024) is the TV licence fee, charged against UK households that watch any live television or use the BBC's online service iPlayer. The licence fee is its own distinct household charge, unrelated to any other household bills or charges, and is collected by the TV Licensing Authority (which also enforces non-payment sanctions) on behalf of the BBC. The value of the licence fee is set by the UK Government and is currently rated at £180 per year. In 2024 the licence fee accounted for 65% (£3.8bn) of BBC revenues, however commercial revenues, for example from selling the IP rights to BBC content, are slowly becoming more important to its total income.

Since 2010 the BBC's public income has fallen by almost 40% in real terms, following successive government funding settlements in which the licence fee was either frozen or kept below inflation.<sup>6</sup> As a result the BBC has drastically reduced investment in core services such as news and local radio – which has since seen a 27% fall in its once-dedicated audience<sup>7</sup> – and cut an estimated 1,000 hours of programming from TV schedules.

Added to this, a small but growing portion of the UK public has stopped paying the TV licence fee, with reasons including the cost of living, opposition to the licence fee and the BBC itself, or households simply not watching live TV or using the BBC's services.<sup>8</sup> The use of live TV or BBC services without paying a TV licence can lead to prosecution and even – in the case of firm refusal to pay – imprisonment, though these cases are rare. The criminalisation of non-payment has nonetheless attracted significant criticism and opposition, not least because many of those pursued for non-payment are in vulnerable or difficult circumstances.<sup>9</sup>

The UK's commercially-funded PSBs – ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 – have also faced financial challenges from the decline in spend on TV advertising. While holding broadly stable revenues, their contribution to UK PSM has slumped, leaving the BBC as the main (and in some cases, sole) provider of many core PSM genres. Between 2010 and 2023, UK PSBs' investment in programming across education (-68%), arts (-60%), religion & ethics (-50%) and programmes for children (-38%) has collapsed.<sup>10</sup> The decline in PSM output risks undermining the fundamental justification for public intervention in media markets – providing socially valuable and democratically necessary forms of media content that would not otherwise be produced by commercial operators.

<sup>6</sup> Voice of the Listener and Viewer (2024) *38% cut in BBC Public Funding: VLV Analysis*. 21 October 2024. Government funding deals in 2010 and 2015 forced the BBC to take on additional costs previously funded by the UK Government, including the BBC World Service, licence fee exemptions for over-75s, and funding for S4C.

<sup>7</sup> House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (2024) *The BBC's implementation of Across the UK*. 25 March 2024, HC 426; for audience statistics and details of the BBC's local radio changes, see David Lloyd (2025) *BBC local radio returns for another go!*, 26 October 2025. Accessed 28 October 2025.

<sup>8</sup> The Guardian, 'BBC to look at overhauling licence fee as 300,000 more households stop paying', 15 July 2025.

<sup>9</sup> The Guardian, 'The TV licence fee scandal: why are 1,000 people a week being casually criminalised?', 29 February 2024.

<sup>10</sup> Author analysis of Ofcom industry data.

# Governance and democratic oversight – Public service without public legitimacy

The collapse in PSM funding and investment is closely linked to the total absence of genuine democratic accountability for how the UK's PSBs or Ofcom are run.

ITV and Channel 5 are private companies with limited PSM obligations, yet both persistently lobby to reduce these while keeping their benefits as designated PSBs.<sup>11</sup> Ofcom's preference for supporting the interests of broadcasters, rather than defending the interests of citizens, is a long-running consequence of its founding purpose as a pro-competition regulator.<sup>12</sup>

The governance arrangements for the publicly-owned Channel 4 and S4C are no more transparent or democratic. Channel 4's non-executive directors are appointed by Ofcom in agreement with the UK Government, which also appoints the Chair of Ofcom. Lord Michael Grade, the current Chair of Ofcom, is a former TV executive and member of the House of Lords. He previously sat as an unelected Conservative legislator before being appointed to Ofcom under Conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The Chair of S4C and its non-executive Board members are all appointed by the UK government: neither the *Senedd* (Welsh Parliament) nor the devolved Welsh Government holds any oversight powers for the Welsh-language channel.<sup>13</sup>

The BBC's Royal Charter, which serves as the BBC's constitution, states the BBC "must be independent in all matters ... particularly as regards editorial and creative decisions".<sup>14</sup> In reality, the BBC has always been subordinate to state and political influence, primarily through government powers to set the terms of the Royal Charter, determine its level of public funding, and appoint key figures to the BBC Board.<sup>15</sup>

The 2019-24 Conservative government engaged in a sustained campaign against the BBC through politicised appointments and funding. In 2021 it appointed Richard Sharp, a Conservative Party mega-donor and right-wing think-tank director, as BBC Chair. This followed a lengthy 'air war' with government figures teasing arch-Conservative candidates to rein in the BBC's perceived left-wing bias.<sup>16</sup> An anonymous BBC source emphasised the Chair's importance as a conduit for opaque government influence, saying of Sharp "whatever you think of bankers, he is very client-friendly, and our biggest client is the government".<sup>17</sup> Sharp stood down as BBC Chair in April 2023 after a report found financial conflicts of interest with the former Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who had appointed him to the post.<sup>18</sup>

The government also appointed Robbie Gibb – a former spin doctor for Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May – as a non-executive BBC director. Non-executives hold only an advisory role, but Gibb has been repeatedly accused of interfering in BBC news output. A former BBC news grandee described Gibb as "an active agent of the Conservative Party" who had censored critical reporting of the Conservative government.<sup>19</sup> Gibb is also allegedly involved with BBC efforts to alter its news and drama output to placate the insurgent right-wing party Reform UK, whose senior figures (including its leader Nigel Farage) have pledged to scrap the TV licence fee.<sup>20</sup>

In 2022 the Conservative Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries announced a two-year freeze to the TV licence fee, which amounted to a projected £2.2bn loss in BBC income by 2027. Dorries claimed this licence fee deal "will be the last", seemingly confirming government plans to end BBC public funding via the TV licence.<sup>21</sup> In 2024 the government fur-

11 The Guardian, 'Ofcom "could not stop ITV and Channel 5 cutting PSB programming"', 2 September 2011.

12 Livingstone, S., Lunt, P. and Miller, L. (2007) Citizens, consumers and the citizen-consumer: articulating the citizen interest in media and communications regulation in *Discourse & Communication* 1(1):63-89.

13 In 2023 an independent expert panel, commissioned by the Welsh Government, investigated methods for devolving broadcasting powers to Wales. However, in 2025, the Welsh Government declined to proceed with implementing its recommendations.

14 UK Government (2016) *Royal Charter for the continuance of the British Broadcasting Corporation*. Cm 9365, pg. 4.

15 Mills, T. (2020) *The BBC: Myth of a public service*. Verso: London; Curran, J. and Seaton, J. (2025) *Power Without Responsibility*, 9th Edition. Routledge: London.

16 Chivers, T. (2021) *The Cosy Politics of the BBC Chair*. *Tribune Magazine*, 16 January 2021.

17 Quoted in *The Guardian*, 'Richard Sharp: BBC chair may be a Tory donor but it could be far worse', 7 January 2021.

18 BBC News, 'BBC Chairman resigns over report into appointment', 28 April 2023.

19 The Guardian, 'Emily Maitlis says "active Tory party agent" shaping BBC news output', 24 August 2022.

20 *Byline Times*, 'BBC bosses drawing up plans to win over Reform voters by changing news and drama output', 9 June 2025.

21 The Guardian, 'BBC funding "up for discussion", says Nadine Dorries, as licence fee frozen', 17 January 2022.

ther meddled in the BBC's supposedly independent editorial decision-making via the mid-term review of the BBC's Royal Charter, a new mechanism for political interference introduced by the 2016 Charter.<sup>22</sup> In March 2024 the government announced an official review of BBC funding, featuring an 'expert panel' of commercial media figures and vocal opponents of the TV licence fee.<sup>23</sup>

This panel's discussions have never been published and, although it was discontinued by the newly elected Labour government, the exercise exemplified the UK's undemocratic, unaccountable and sporadic approach to PSM policymaking.<sup>24</sup> Governments directly interfere at whim with the independence and governance of PSBs, while Parliament has no means to challenge appointments and funding decisions. The UK public are powerless bystanders to the murky world of back-room negotiations and political threats that defines the relationship between the government and the BBC. The role and importance of *the public* in public service media is either conveniently ignored or ventriloquised by politicians.

22 Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2024) *BBC Mid-Term Review 2024*. January 2024.

23 UK Government press release, 'Expert panel appointed to advise on the BBC's future funding', 21 March 2024.

24 Media Reform Coalition, 'BBC funding review: another behind-closed-doors attack on independent public media', 23 April 2024.

# Competition and digitalisation – From world-leaders to junior partners

The democratic disconnect between the British public and PSBs is made even more stark by the decreasing use and relevance of broadcast formats in how audiences find and access media content.

In 2018, broadcast content (including live TV and recorded or on-demand playback) accounted for 71% of UK audiences' viewing time. By 2024 this share had fallen to 56% while the use of streaming video-on-demand ('SVoDs', e.g. Netflix or Amazon Prime) and video-sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube) had almost doubled over the same period.<sup>25</sup> Approximately 70% of UK households are subscribed to at least one SVoD, with Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+ making up three-quarters of all UK SVoD subscriptions.<sup>26</sup>

While the BBC and ITV are still the most-watched live TV channels, YouTube and Netflix are now UK audiences' 2nd and 4th most used audiovisual services.<sup>27</sup> These trends are even stronger amongst younger audiences. Under-35s spend more time watching SVoD and video-sharing content than broadcast TV, and PSBs' TV channels are vastly overshadowed by Netflix and YouTube as younger audiences' first choice for audiovisual content.<sup>28</sup> This is a precarious position for UK PSBs. Their core public service audience on TV and radio consists of a shrinking, older cohort, while younger audiences – on whom PSBs' future use, funding and political support depends – predominantly use social media, video-sharing and SVoD services, meaning they are far less likely to develop a connection with UK PSM content.<sup>29</sup>

UK PSBs, Ofcom and successive governments have been exceptionally slow to address the accelerating growth of online media technologies. In the 2000s UK PSBs led the 'digital switchover' in TV distribution, while Channel 4 and the BBC pioneered video-on-demand services with 4od in 2006 and BBC iPlayer in 2007. Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings has even credited the BBC for "blazing the trail" for SVoD as the future of TV distribution.

Recently, however, UK PSBs have been passive players in the development of social networking, video sharing and algorithmic content recommendations, and are struggling to articulate a distinct public value on for-profit digital platforms. On platforms like X/Twitter and Instagram, attempts to distinguish PSM news as independent and trustworthy must contend with high levels of distrust and antagonism towards 'mainstream' news providers, feelings that are often aggravated by public interventions from platform owners like Elon Musk.

Arguably the greatest failure of UK PSM over the last decade has been the absence of any attempt to create public alternatives to the Big Tech monopolies. By developing social media or video sharing platforms as public services, UK PSM could have established digital media institutions operated solely in the public interest, rather than as profit-seeking businesses built on exploiting users' data and enflaming political polarisation.<sup>30</sup>

Instead, shrinking budgets and disappearing TV audiences have forced UK PSBs to become junior partners with the dominant global media players. PSBs increasingly depend on the largest streaming or social platforms to ensure their content reaches a wide audience, or to co-produce and co-fund PSM content.<sup>31</sup> This has resulted in the gradual loss not only of PSBs' ability to compete internationally, but also of audiences' recognition of when a successful or impactful programme was originally made by a UK PSB.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Audience viewing statistics from Ofcom Media Nations reports, 2018 (pg. 21) and 2025 (pg. 18) editions.

<sup>26</sup> Media Reform Coalition (2025) *Who Owns the UK Media? 2025 Report*. May 2025

<sup>27</sup> Ofcom *Media Nations – UK Report 2025* (pg. 23).

<sup>28</sup> Ofcom *Transmission Critical: The future of Public Service Media*. July 2025, pgs. 18-19.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 17.

<sup>30</sup> Jay, H. (2024) *The possibilities of a 'public service' intervention to support a good digital society*. The British Academy.

<sup>31</sup> Ofcom *Transmission Critical: The future of Public Service Media*. July 2025, pg. 25.

<sup>32</sup> JIGSAW/Ofcom (2020) *An exploration of people's relationship with PSB, qualitative research report*. July 2020, pg. 39.

# The Media Act 2024 – More carrots, fewer sticks

Since the mid-2010s it has been clear that, unless the UK's PSM policy framework was radically revised, PSBs faced serious threats to their ability to deliver public benefits.<sup>33</sup> In July 2019 Ofcom told the government that new legislation was needed to support the sustainability of PSBs, in particular by extending the prominence framework – regulations that ensure PSBs' services are prominently displayed on the electronic programme guides used to navigate and access channels on a TV – so that 'smart' TVs, streaming sticks and other increasingly popular digital devices were included in the regime.<sup>34</sup>

The PSBs welcomed these proposals to reinforce their visibility to audiences on digital media, and urged politicians to act fast. But it wasn't until mid-2022 that the government finally published a 'White Paper' setting out its plans for reforming PSB legislation.<sup>35</sup> This paper also proposed sweeping deregulations of the wider PSM framework. The PSM remit as defined in the Communications Act 2003 (above) was targeted for extensive revisions, the government claiming without evidence that the original list of genres and objectives was "outdated" and "overlapping".<sup>36</sup>

The White Paper also proposed the privatisation of Channel 4, with the sale estimated to earn around £1bn for the UK treasury – though industry analysis indicated it would also cost £2bn in lost economic value through Channel 4 ending its PSM commitments.<sup>37</sup> Privatisation was universally opposed by the broadcasting industry, civil society groups, many politicians and the general public, yet the government persisted with seeking potential buyers until abandoning the sale in early 2023.

When the Media Bill was eventually tabled in parliament in June 2023, PSBs had been waiting almost five years for enhanced prominence on digital platforms. They had also been teased with the tantalising prospect of a reduction in the range of genres and objectives that Ofcom would require them to fulfil. This in effect meant that PSBs would be granted more 'carrots', in the form of expanded regulatory advantages, while simultaneously facing fewer 'sticks' from Ofcom, allowing them to further scale back their

investment in PSM content. Although the Citizens' Forum for PSM, a small civil society coalition, lobbied MPs and ministers to reverse the narrowing of the PSM remit, the broadcasters also lobbied to ensure the Bill was passed without delay. The government minister in charge of promoting the Bill even refused to receive public submissions or expert testimony to inform parliament's deliberations.

Thus the Media Act 2024 – passed in July 2024, literally hours before parliament was dissolved for the general election – represents a total inversion of the traditional rationale for PSM. Instead of establishing clear principles and valuable benefits that PSBs should provide for UK citizens, UK PSM legislation now prioritises protecting the viability and market position of otherwise arbitrarily designated broadcasting companies, who are subject to even fewer requirements for delivering PSM services to British audiences.

<sup>33</sup> This growing existential crisis was detailed in the 2020 FES briefing on UK PSM, see Freedman, D. (2020) *Verlorene Ausstrahlung? Öffentlich-rechtlicher Rundfunk in Großbritannien*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

<sup>34</sup> Ofcom (2019) *Recommendations to government for a new framework to keep PSB TV prominent in an online world*. July 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2022) *Up Next: The Government's vision for the broadcasting sector*. April 2022

<sup>36</sup> Media Reform Coalition (2023) *The Media Bill – Policy briefing*. November 2023.

<sup>37</sup> Ampere Analysis (2022) *Channel 4 privatisation: A potential disaster for the UK independent TV sector?*

# The BBC Royal Charter review – Who decides the future of PSM?

By December 2027 the government is required to renew the BBC's Royal Charter. During the last Charter review in 2015-2016, debates on the future of the BBC attracted strong public engagement, yet the then-Conservative government's policymaking process was deeply undemocratic and highly politicised. Many expected the current Labour government to be more cooperative with the BBC, but relations between the new administration and the BBC have quickly cooled. Research of the BBC's coverage of the war in Gaza has identified a systematic bias against Palestinian voices, yet Labour's Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy has focused her ire on disproven accusations of anti-Israeli coverage.<sup>38</sup> Nandy has also maintained a deliberately vague stance on future funding for the BBC, ruling out general taxation while flirting with 'two-tier' models such as introducing advertising or subscription alongside reduced public funding.<sup>39</sup>

Alongside the urgent challenges facing PSBs in the new media landscape, the upcoming Charter review could become a focal point for many intractable crises in British society, such as the loss of trust in public institutions, and the fragmentation of social and political communication, driven in no small part by oligarch-dominated media and tech platforms. These are precisely the kinds of crises that a trusted, robust and democratic PSM ecology should help resolve, but UK PSBs – and the BBC in particular – lack the means or the motive to fulfil this essential purpose.

Tackling these existential questions must involve democratising PSM itself, starting by reorganising the upcoming Charter review process as an exercise of direct public participation in PSM policy-making. The governance and operations of the BBC should also be democratised, permanently ending the pervasive state and political interference that has undermined the BBC's essential independence. Transforming the BBC into a mutual organisation – owned and controlled by the British public as 'members' with active and direct involvement in how the BBC is run – would be a radical but effective reform to achieve this.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Centre for Media Monitoring (2025) *BBC on Gaza-Israel: One story, double standards*. June 2025; Media Reform Coalition (2024) *BBC, bias and Gaza: a partial study of impartiality*. September 2024. The Centre for Media Monitoring is a media research group, originally established as part of the Muslim Council of Britain, which monitors coverage of Muslims and Islam in the UK media.

<sup>39</sup> The Times (paywall), 'Lisa Nandy: Replace BBC licence fee with mix of funding', 4 October 2025.

<sup>40</sup> Hind, D, Mills, T. and Chivers, T. (2025) *Our Mutual Friend: The BBC in the Digital Age*. Media Reform Coalition and Common Wealth.

# Conclusion – Democratisation or bust

After decades of cuts, political attacks and deregulation, UK PSM stands on a cliff-edge. Piecemeal reforms aimed at ‘preserving’ the status quo of PSM will neither safeguard its future nor address the democratic disconnect between PSBs and the citizens they are supposed to serve. Advocates of PSM around the world can draw on many international examples for advancing PSM’s role in a fragmented, polarised and concentrated global media landscape. Denmark’s cultural levy on streamers might offer PSBs a chance to challenge the financial drain on domestic content. BBC defenders looking with great interest at the *rundfunkbeitrag* as a possible alternative to the deeply unpopular TV licence fee. Devolution of broadcasting (as in the Basque Country and Flanders) or even federalisation (as in Germany) also offers a means to decentralise power over who makes, funds and governs public media.

But even with this arsenal of progressive solutions, will forthcoming debates empower the public to express its own needs and interests? What mechanisms will enable these demands to impact on the future place and purpose of PSM? Or will these processes be captured by the usual suspects and vested interests? If the British public continues to have no active or direct role in how PSM is organised on their behalf, then UK PSBs will lose the essential public legitimacy necessary to sustain their fundamental purpose as independent, universal, trusted organisations for public good.

## November 2025 – BBC failures open the door to a political coup

*The words ‘BBC’ and ‘scandal’ are rarely far apart. As the final text for this briefing was being prepared, the BBC was rocked by another major crisis at the highest levels of its management and governance. An internal BBC report into editorial failures was leaked, detailing (amongst other matters) a prominent case of sloppily edited footage from Donald Trump’s speech prior to the January 6th Capital riots.*

*While the BBC leadership floundered in responding, the UK’s virulently anti-BBC newspapers mounted a super-charged campaign of bloodletting, seizing on the opportunity to attack the BBC’s perceived institutional biases. The pressure was enough to force the resignation of both the BBC’s CEO of News and its Director-General, Tim Davie. Early reports indicate that Robbie Gibb, the Conservative-appointed BBC board member, played a key role in organising an unprecedented BBC Board putsch against these two major figures.<sup>41</sup>*

*By time of publication, this saga may have fizzled out or snowballed into an even greater crisis for the BBC. But the immediate reactions demonstrate the emerging battle lines for the upcoming debates on the BBC’s future Royal Charter. Both sides have seized these events to condemn the BBC as unrepresentative and institutionally ungovernable, yet while one faction decries proof of an unshakeably left-wing and metropolitan bias in the BBC’s culture, the other blames the overbearing role of political interference and corporate self-preservation in how the BBC seeks to address and resolve major public scandals.*

*Above all, the scandal is yet another example of major debates about the BBC – whether humiliating scandals or technocratic decision-making – taking place entirely as conflicts between different parts of Britain’s entrenched political-media elite. While rival politicians, broadcasting industry figureheads and large media corporations argue over which vision of the BBC they believe ‘the public’ wants the most, the British public itself is left as a passive and powerless bystander.*

<sup>41</sup> The Guardian, ‘BBC board member with Tory links ‘led charge’ in systemic bias claims, say insiders’, 10 November 2025.

## Author

**Dr Tom Chivers** is a researcher in media policy at Goldsmiths, University of London. He has written widely on the crises and future of public service media, including leading an [international study on broadcasting governance](#) and lobbying the UK parliament on reforming PSM legislation. He is campaign co-ordinator for the Media Reform Coalition, and author of the [Media Manifesto 2024](#) and [Who Owns The UK Media?](#).

## At the Cliff-Edge: Public Service Broadcasting in the UK



Public service broadcasting in the UK faces an existential crisis. Rapid evolutions in the media landscape have prompted sweeping changes to media legislation, regulation and broadcasters' corporate strategies. However, these efforts have exposed contradictions in how UK politicians and public broadcasters think about the purposes of public service media.



The declining appeal of UK public media has also revealed the consequences of routine political interference in how these organisations are funded, regulated and governed.



This briefing reviews developments in UK PSB over the last 5 years, and details how major policy debates over the next 5 years will be decisive for the survival – or terminal failure – of public media in the UK.

Further information on this topic can be found here:

➤ [fes.de](https://fes.de)