

**A model for difference:**

**Understanding Competition and Diversity in Greek Television Programming**

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## Abstract

This research examines and analyses the diversity of television content. More specifically, it provides an in-depth study of the development of television content. We attempt to study content through the concept of diversity, which is considered as being a methodological tool that records and describes trends in television programming. Through the methodological use of diversity, the rationale behind the programming structure is presented and, therefore, the structures that create and constitute the content can be shown. A detailed discussion is developed, as well as a new approach to television diversity, in light of the methodological examination. This research is based on theoretical approaches to the study of diversity of content, such as, for example, Napolis' approach, which divides the study of content into three levels: 'Source diversity', 'content diversity' and 'exposure diversity'. Another example is the approach developed by Valcke, based on the levels of 'supplier', 'product' and 'outlet'. This research focuses on Greek television, as a case with its own characteristic features and particularities, which are analysed throughout this thesis. The Audio-Visual Laboratory of Athens University was the main source of data, but other sources are also analysed using this methodology. More specifically, this study examines television content with respect to three structures: The degree of diversity of programming genres, the diversity of news content (viewpoint diversity) and diversity at the level of programming production (source diversity). The research objectives of this study are as follows: to determine if the degree of content diversity is a function of specific factors that are related to the frequency of genres (i.e., reruns, broadcast frequency), to examine news content as a separate genre and how this has evolved, based on which factors, and to examine the diversity at the level of sources, meaning the level of production, and how these decisions regarding the content impact the level of diversity. The methodological categorization of television content diversity into these three levels constitutes a basis that allows for an increased understanding of the way television programming is developed and how these structures, namely genre diversity, viewpoint diversity and source diversity, interact with each other, thus affecting the total degree of content diversity. The findings of this study, such as, for example, the impact of the restructuring of television markets based on content, the impact of source diversity on genre diversity, the influence of exogenous factors, such as, the institutional frame and other issues that are discussed in the last chapter help us move towards a better understanding of the structures that constitute the methodological and conceptual diversity of television content.

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Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and close friends for putting up with me over the years that I have worked on my thesis.

## **Declaration**

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Andreas Masouras,

Friday, 14 December, 2012.

Dedicated to the memory of the journalist Andreas Christodoulides and to all those who fight cancer.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The television content in question

The importance of Newton Minow's (1961) classic speech on television, which was delivered at the National Association of Broadcasters convention, is still valid today, since the forming of television content, its tendencies and the parameters for its study, evaluation and assessment are still debated today. Minow's words, in the following quotation, illustrate the unrelenting significance of the matter: "...But when television is bad, nothing is worse. I invite you to sit down in front of the television set when your channel goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit-and-loss sheet or rating book to distract you – and keep your eyes glued to that set until the channel signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland. You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, Western bad men, Western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials – many screaming, cajoling and offending. And most of all, boredom. True, you will see a few things you will enjoy. But they will be very, very few. And if you think I exaggerate, try it." (Minow, 1961).

The relevance of the above quotation of Minow's (1961) for the following research lies in the fact that forming the content of television – the issue in question in this research – is not a simple and straightforward matter. It involves various forms and levels of analysis and it cannot be addressed in a one-dimensional and simplistic way; rather, it requires a wider approach in order for the parameters that form, constitute and finally construct the content to be understood. The concept of content can refer to various notions and it can consist of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Krippendorff, 2004).

The complexity of assessing content comes across in Minow's speech (1961), an excerpt of which is set out above. This complexity is centred upon the basic question of how television content is evaluated and assessed. For instance, the belief that television programming is of increasingly low quality – a typical opinion among viewers – is a quite straightforward conclusion, which, however, contains within it a complicated and multi-levelled methodological issue. Newcomb and Hirsch (1983) describe television as an aesthetic object, which has its nucleus within the content. Interestingly, the authors, even though they

approach the matter from the cultural perspective of content, argue that its study should employ the textual levels and the various forms that constitute the content.

Within the problematic issue of studying content, the concept of diversity, which is the key concept studied in this research, holds a leading role. It is a key concept for the study of content but, at the same time, equally problematic. The challenging nature of diversity stems from the fact that it functions in a multi-levelled way and it can be applied, but not as a single-concept, to a number of parameters and matters (McDonald and Dimmick, 2003). McDonald and Dimmick (2003), in their study on the conceptualization of diversity, classified the concept on a quantitative basis, distinguishing between three dimensions according to its methodological orientation. The first dimension of diversity is the classification of data that one wishes to examine within the framework of diversity, for example, the classification of data regarding types of firms or programming. The second methodological dimension of diversity concerns data distribution within the categories; this involves, in other words, classifying subcategories. In the case of television content, for instance, this occurs when programmes are categorized into genres and subgenres. The third dimension of diversity according to McDonald and Dimmick (2003) is that of “dual-concept” diversity which examines two different parameters simultaneously; the authors define dual-concept diversity as: “...a two-dimensional construct that holds a central place of study in many fields, including communication” (p.60). McDonald and Dimmick locate the notion of dual-concept diversity in Junge’s work (1994), who originally uses it in the field of psychology and uses this dual terminology in considering the number of classes and in the extent of the homogeneity of the data distribution has in a piece of research. McDonald and Dimmick, based on Junge’s rationale, explain the conceptual extension of dual-concept diversity to the area of media content: “One dimension reflects the categories of classification, and the other reflects the distribution of elements within those categories. This “dual-concept” diversity (in Junge’s, 1994, terminology) is central to virtually all conceptualizations of diversity” (p.74). It is essentially a theoretical construct, as is, for instance, Stirling’s approach (1998) on variety, disparity and heterogeneity, which is discussed in the third chapter and can be applied to a wide spectrum of fields, from natural sciences to social sciences. More specifically, McDonald and Dimmick (2003) argue that: “The general concept of diversity has been applied to a number of different areas” (p.62). Ruta and Gabrys (2001), also refer to diversity as a general concept which can be broadly applied: “Diversity among classifiers is the notion describing the level to which classifiers



vary in data representation, concepts, strategy etc. That way perceived multidimensional diversity has many faces but its effects observed at the outputs of classifiers are the same...” (p.1).

This general approach used by McDonald and Dimmick, which initially – as it was mentioned above – was developed as a “dual-concept” terminology by Junge, differs greatly from context-specific conceptualizations, such as Napoli’s (1999), which deals with media content policies. McDonald and Dimmick argue that: “In the present study, the term dimension refers not to contexts of application but instead to characteristics of the diversity concept that are present in all contexts. We seek to specify general guidelines related to measures of diversity that might be found in many contexts or applications in which diversity is an issue. It is our contention that the clarification of the concept of diversity and an evaluation of its measures can lead to greater clarity in the research literature in all fields in which diversity is a central concept.” (p.63). Junge (1994) fleshes out the concept of diversity with the attribute of quantity: “In statistical terms a measure (index) of diversity is a summary description of a population with a class structure. More generally, quantification of diversity is related to the apportionment of some quantity (e.g., number of elements, time, and mass) into a number of well-defined classes...” (p.16).

Returning to the matter of content, the relation between content and diversity appears in a number of research studies examining this particular subject. In the third chapter, where empirical approaches are discussed, such research studies will be addressed, as, for instance, Napoli’s study (1999) on content diversity, and diversity will be analysed both as a policy issue and as a non-policy objective in an attempt to render its notional boundaries clear and discernible and to further discuss its methodological orientation. That is, the way in which diversity is approached as a tool for assessing various content parameters and the limits – if any – to its use as an approach. This research does not limit content study strictly within the context of diversity of genre – a typical approach when the issue of content diversity is examined – but it moves outside this framework, exploring television content and its development from other perspectives as well. It is claimed here that for a complete study of content, a multifaceted approach is required; this is the reason why, as it will be shown below through the research queries, content diversity is examined using a multi-levelled approach.

## **1.2. Quality in television and the link with diversity**

The concept of quality is discussed in this subchapter because of the close correlation between content quality and diversity. Quality and diversity are frequently confused, as, for instance, with regard to the popular idea that if there is content diversity in scheduling, this will automatically entail quality or, even, that the quality of a schedule depends on specific programming genres and that broadcasting certain genres instead of others may raise or lower the quality of the programming. However, such conclusions are clearly subjective, since quality genres do not automatically promote content diversity. In other words, content quality does not necessarily promote diversity of genre and content, or the other way round.

In this study, it is not worthwhile or relevant for us to engage in a conceptual discussion of terms, such as quality, since – as is detailed below – the polysemy of the term would make this very difficult. It is more relevant for us to study the correlation between quality and diversity and to discuss certain components of their relation. Moreover, the relation between quality and diversity, and the way it is formed through shared features, can contribute to a deeper understanding, through new variables, of media policy design.

Some further discussion is, however, necessary to underline the fact that quality cannot be defined, as it is a dynamic, changeable and sometimes general and abstract concept. These features are attributed to the methodologically problematic nature of the concept of quality, since it cannot be assessed on the basis of specific variables, nor can unequivocal conclusions on its nature be attained (Taylor, 2003). When a researcher attempts to interpret and approach the term, the provided definition is de facto constructed through subjective interpretations. By far the majority of the efforts to define it are semantic, aiming to eliminate this academic “softness”, ambiguity, liminality and dissonance, in order to encourage and promote research on this specific issue. An approach attempting to conceptually specify the various levels of quality was presented by Celata and Albani (2005). The authors distinguish between seven levels of quality (perceived quality, expected quality, requisite quality, acquired quality, ethical quality, delivered quality, organizational quality). Celata and Albani (2005) attempt to clarify quality, firstly, through the above-mentioned classification and, secondly, by placing it within the context of customer satisfaction, technological impact and the financial management of quality. The authors (2005), referring to the quality of television programming, argue that the study of content quality has purely financial standards with respect to its approach and the way it is assessed. They mention, for example, the issues of

production cost or of licence fees for programming and advertising inflow that a schedule can incur as matters that place the concept of quality within a financial context. On the other hand, the authors (2005) claim that the quality of television programming is not independent from the creative part, since through the process of content creation or, more specifically, of creating a programme, certain variables may be established, which can shape the quality of the programming (2005).

The assessment of content quality is closely related to concepts which can define the various aspects of quality. One such concept, which can establish variables for the assessment of programming quality - or at least for a partial qualitative analysis of a schedule -, is the concept of diversity.

It is possible to observe the way content quality corresponds to content diversity and the areas in which they coincide thanks to the research that was conducted by the Cyprus Radio Television Authority (2006). The aim of this research was to establish certain criteria for the evaluation and assessment of quality with regard to radio and television in Cyprus.

Some of the quality assessment parameters used in the research, found in the proposals and conclusions section, include factors such as the cost and level of local productions, the broadcasting scheduling, the types of foreign series that are being broadcast and the variety of the shows (Cyprus Radio television Authority, 2006).

Programming variety in particular, but also other criteria, such as the production cost and selection, which basically concern the process of production and source diversity – an issue that will be discussed in detail below – are related to the concept of diversity. In other words, the study of the diversity of specific aspects of the content, such as genre and programming type analysis, as well as the analysis of the degree of diversity, are used as parameters for determining the level of the quality of programming.

Hillve, Majanen and Rosengren (1997) approach this correlation between quality and diversity in a more direct and specific way. They argue that the quality of a channel depends on the degree of diversity of its programming. According to them, quality as a concept cannot be defined, since any definition of quality can be drawn from a multitude of dimensions. The authors (1997) claim that the solution to this conceptual dilemma is to be found within the concept of diversity. In the following subchapters and throughout this thesis, the notion of diversity will be analysed and its conceptual dimensions will be shown.

Therefore, due to the complexity of this concept and because of its correlation with diversity, as has already been mentioned, the most useful and appropriate mechanism for addressing the quality of television content (in this research, only the concept of content diversity, not quality is addressed empirically) is to assemble and refer to specific criteria that could be used to identify a method of programming that has the necessary traits. Such criteria have been assembled by Papathanassopoulos (1993), who offers some clear and significant parameters:

1. Freedom of expression is imperative so that the work of the creator is not used for maximising viewing ratings.
2. The producer of a schedule should not be under time pressure to complete the work.
3. A high standard of professionalism is required and the people involved in the programming's production should be fully aware of any technical developments in the field of their activities.
4. A quality production should be original and the creator should give the impression that the created work can educate viewers and promote awareness among them (Papathanassopoulos, 1993).

Furthermore, other factors may contribute to improving the quality of the content of television programming such as, for instance, if it is of an educational nature, or if pluralism and the representativeness of all social groups are present. All these factors contribute actively to the quality of programming. As far as this issue is concerned, the existing commercial logic of the media is, for the most part, not in line with these specific features.

From the aforementioned studies it is obvious that quality is not independent from related concepts, such as diversity, since it is not possible to provide a commonly accepted definition. This means that quality can be approached using various indicators, which quite frequently account for different or even contradictory issues, given that a researcher may perceive a factor as a negative or a positive parameter with respect to quality assessment. For instance, Papathanassopoulos (1993) claims that the work of the creator should not be used for raising the viewing ratings, whereas Crawford (2007) considers programming ratings as a quality criterion.

This means that the polysemy of the concept of quality undoubtedly has an impact on various studies that claim to measure quality. In this respect, it is worth noting that some studies take, as a basic standard of quality, those programmes which attract the highest numbers of viewers, thus leading to the conclusion that the highest quality programmes are news bulletins and programmes with violent content, since these are the ones that achieve the highest ratings. Crawford (2007) determines the quality of programming based on two distinct parameters. Firstly, his study refers to audience measurements, estimating that the highest quality programming will have higher ratings. Furthermore, the number and length of advertising spots are also considered as factors that determine the quality of television programming. Crawford (2007) in particular links the quality of programming to purely economic factors: “We similarly focus on economic measures of programming quality. We have two measures. First, we measure quality by the number of households who choose to watch a programme. Second, we measure quality by the number and length (in minutes and seconds) of advertisements included on that programme. This captures the idea that the more advertisements included in a programme, the less enjoyable it is to viewers to watch that programme” (p.2).

Quality is a multidimensional concept which is difficult to approach on one single level. One means of approaching quality is linked to content diversity. At this point, it is important to stress the crucial part diversity plays in parallel concepts, such as quality or pluralism, something which is discussed in the next subchapter. However, the polysemy of the concept, as well as normative discourses, can be rather useful for prospective policy design, since they can benefit the discussion and steer it in this direction. For example, a review or an enrichment of the variables that define at present the quality of programming, may lead to the development of new tendencies in media policy, in particular, with regard to policy concerning television programming. This is because the media policy agenda has no fixed or static status, since it is determined each time it is developed, based on new data. Braman (2004) locates the challenge of approaching and interpreting media policy as being primarily a result of technological development and transformation. Braman argues that: “Various strands of law dealing with information technologies and the content they carry have come together, often burying traditional media policy issues within a vast policy space. Seeing the media policy trees within this forest is difficult” (p.154). In this case as well – namely, of the effects that technological advances may have on media policy – the focus is once more on the content, since this is essentially what is created and consumed by the audience. Therefore, the

degree of content diversity is greatly affected both by external factors, such as technology, as well as by factors that influence the decisions the channels make, such as the ratings of a particular programming schedule.

### **1.3. Pluralism and diversity in the media: Two parallel concepts**

A description of these two concepts – pluralism and diversity – is required before we can proceed to the main research work, which consists of an analysis of the diversity of television content. The differentiation between these two concepts – even if quite often they are considered to be synonyms – can be found by looking at the field of media. Nonetheless, it remains a problematic distinction, since it is rather challenging to define them as two different concepts. Freedman (2005), for instance, claims with regard to the distinction between these two concepts: “...This highlights the key issues – of the democratic requirement for contrasting sources, ideas, forms, and images present in the media environment – but does little to clarify the distinction between the two terms. The confusion is not helped by the fact that U.S. media policy debates generally focus on securing diversity whereas European ones are increasingly coalescing around the objective of pluralism (which, as we shall see, is itself closer to what U.S. policymakers describe as competition)” (p.17).

According to Freedman’s statement, given above, two conclusions can be drawn: Firstly, that there are interpretive difficulties in distinguishing between diversity and pluralism and, secondly, that because the notional boundaries between these two concepts are not clear, clarifying them becomes even more problematic. As is shown above, one aspect of their differentiation is the different way the US media policy and the European agenda interpret and approach these two concepts.

#### **1.3.1. The concept of pluralism in contrast to diversity**

The relationship between pluralism and diversity can be explored using the concept of freedom of opinion and ideas in the media. This perspective is rather interesting because, by using viewpoint diversity, the distinction between pluralism of voices and viewpoint (or opinion) diversity can be further highlighted. The importance that is given to ensuring the inclusion of the opinion of citizens is typical. The above-mentioned approach, used by Freedman, associates pluralism with viewpoint diversity, an issue which is dealt with in the third chapter of this thesis. For instance, Gillian Doyle (2007), on this matter, clarifies that

pluralism and diversity are close as concepts and refers to “different and independent voices”. More specifically she argues that:

In the field of media, pluralism implies general ideas referring to the diversity of content and the diversity of ownership. By referring to pluralism we mean a number of different and independent voices in the media that express different aspects, points of view and perspectives that show all the different dimensions of culture (2007, p.136).

According to Doyle (2002), media pluralism is a concept that coexists with diversity but they act within different conceptual frameworks. The border between these two concepts is not easily discernible; rather, the difference has to do with the more general nature of the description of pluralism in contrast to the specific definitions of diversity. On the other hand, both concepts are important factors in the discussion about public policy. More specifically, Doyle (2002) argues that: “Pluralism and diversity remain the key concerns underlying public policy in this area” (p.174). In addition, Doyle’s view (2002) on ownership status and the way it affects the pluralism of ideas and consequently viewpoint diversity is quite interesting: “The main perceived danger is that excessive concentration of media ownership can lead to over presentation of certain political viewpoints or values or certain forms of cultural output...” (p.13). Even though a multiplicity of suppliers is obviously desirable in many ways, it will not necessarily result in greater content diversity. In fact, counter intuitively, in many situations diversity of ownership can diminish the diversity of content. This is the case, for example, when the former leads to market, revenue and investment fragmentation, which leads to innovation becoming unaffordable. Policymakers know this and actively encourage some degree of market concentration (Helberger, 2011).

Pluralism, according to Doyle, also depends on the variety of media content and sources in order to avoid uniformity in programming and ensure transparency. Referring to the case of the Essex Campaign for Local Radio<sup>1</sup>, she mentions: “The Essex Campaign for Local Radio, for example, argued that consolidation of ownership encourages networking and greater uniformity of output at the expense of local diversity” (p.133). Doyle’s use of the word “networking” seems to be of particular importance for the following study on content formation. “Networking” eludes both to horizontal and vertical grouping in the business

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<sup>1</sup>Campaigns organized by the BBC at a local level, for the promotion and survival of local radio.

sector. Consequently, content networking can be discussed, with regard to its conventionalism towards specific models and tendencies in the market.

As will be shown below, pluralism does not refer only to the ownership status. The relationship between pluralism and diversity concerns specific issues with regard to content form and shaping. Diversity begins when the general idea of pluralism reaches its limits with regard to the interpretation of any quantitative data related to content outflow. The Independent Study on Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States conducted for the European Commission also refers to the limits of media pluralism: “Media pluralism is a concept that goes far beyond media ownership [...]. It embraces many aspects, ranging from, for example, merger control rules to content requirements in broadcasting licensing systems, the establishment of editorial freedoms, the independence and status of public service broadcasters...” (p.2).

Iosifidis (1997) has also dealt with the conceptual clarification of pluralism and diversity and approaches the matter as follows: “Media diversity is indeed a broad concept with many dimensions: plurality of contents, access to different points of view, offering a wide range of choice, geographical diversity, etc. It thus encompasses pluralism of many kinds: regional, linguistic, political, and cultural and in taste levels. Consequently, by concentrating on this notion, one will be able to cover a wide spectrum of social benefits that need to be preserved if the media are to support democratic life” (p.86). In a more recent study, Iosifidis (2008) associates pluralism with competition and specifically analyses the case of public service broadcasters at the European level.

Iosifidis refers to a number of cases: “...For example, in countries such as Belgium, Switzerland and Spain there are more than one public service broadcaster due to historical, cultural or linguistic reasons, but they normally serve different communities or, as in Spain, different regions (...) France Televisions, the French public broadcaster, and Arte, the Franco-German cultural channel, do not testify to a plurality of public service broadcasters, as Arte has always meant to be a niche broadcaster, and is now an artificial creation designed to serve a political purpose. France 2 and France 3 fit the bill better, but have of course been folded into the France Televisions holding. The same applies to Greek television broadcasters ET-1 (mainstream), NET (mainly news) and ET-3 (covering events from northern Greece)...” (p.185).



In seeking to adopt an overall approach to the term, we focus on certain key issues. In most approaches, especially in those developed before the middle of the 1990s, pluralism seems to be closely associated with the ownership status of television channels; for instance, what Iosifidis refers to, revolves around the ownership status of public broadcasters at a European level and, in particular, around the operational status of these public broadcasters. Besides from this, Iosifidis also relates the operational status of public broadcasters – the competitive environment in which they operate – to their content. Iosifidis specifically refers to: “Key public service genres” (p.186), meaning those genres which make up the core of the programming agenda.

The relation between pluralism and content leads to the concept of diversity. Pluralism is a more normative concept, in the sense that it manifests itself within the broader public sphere and functions as the theoretical basis which leads to the concept of diversity. In contrast, diversity is a measurable quantity, due to the fact that it has specific parameters that can be studied. Therefore, while people refer to pluralism of voices in general, when diversity is studied, the matters under examination become more specific, as in the case of political diversity in news bulletins, which makes it easier for the researcher to draw conclusions with regard to the degree of the pluralism of voices. Another example is the more general nature of “pluralism in the programming” in contrast to “genre diversity” in studies of the concept of diversity. Karppinen (2007) offers another conceptual differentiation between pluralism and diversity, which lends to pluralism the trait of ‘unicity’ and to diversity, that of ‘uniformity’, claiming that the concept of pluralism remains a more general one: “...pluralism, in whatever field of enquiry, refers to a theorized preference for multiplicity over unicity and diversity over uniformity. In this sense, almost all particular discourses could be conceived as reflecting some aspect of the pluralism/monism interface. Similarly, pluralism is conceived here more as a general intellectual orientation than a specific school of thought or ideology, and the specific manifestations of this orientation would, thus, be expected to change depending on the context.” (p.11). Nevertheless, this distinction, provided by Karppinen, between the qualities of pluralism and diversity, namely “unicity” and “uniformity”, is not an explicit one, since these two concepts do not present a clear conceptual correlation or distinction. This view is related to the concept of ‘pluriformity’, as employed by van Cuilenburg (1982).

Yet another conceptual dimension of pluralism – which further clarifies the relation between pluralism and diversity – lies in the subdivisions of the concept of pluralism, namely in external and internal pluralism. External pluralism is also referred to as structural pluralism. These are essentially two specializations of the concept of pluralism which, as will be shown below, converge at some level with the concept of diversity. External pluralism is associated with media ownership status in favour of a free market economy and free competition and against any restrictive practices related to the entry of new competitors into the field. With regard to external pluralism, a large range of suppliers is a guarantee of pluralism. The European Commission (2005), referring to this type of pluralism, attempts an interpretive approach: “...the concept of structural pluralism ... relates to the plurality of undertakings active on a specific market and has historically been associated with the press sector and the perceived need to constantly maintain a plurality of actors and outlets in a sector...” (p.3). On the other hand, internal pluralism is associated with content and diversity itself, as it concerns the pluralism of opinion, the pluralism of ideas and the pluralism of manners that are promoted in the context of specific media.

The conceptual definition that Iosifidis (2008) provides for internal pluralism is as follows: “...internal pluralism is mainly related to the various scheduling and programming strategies for the different audience targets of the various channels” (p.187). Porte, Medina and Sadaba’s (2007) interpretation is along the same lines, with regard to scheduling and content programming. The difference is that they introduce to their conceptual interpretation the element of expression, and the circulation of ideas and opinions in connection with the genres that constitute the content: “...internal pluralism is linked to the diversity of genres, ideas and opinions in the content” (p.381). In this approach, the concept of diversity is used, which is dealt with in greater depth in the next sub-chapter. Nevertheless, it is important to attempt a conceptual delimitation between pluralism and diversity, even though it is extremely difficult to provide an explicit clarification.

Humphreys (1996), referring to the concept of internal pluralism, focuses on public broadcasters and the impact their programming should have on society: “...As mentioned, it was also a fundamental axiom that public-service broadcasting systems should provide a universal service catering to democratic pluralism and social diversity. This aim was written into their ‘generalised mandates’ (...) and practiced within their programming schedules by all public service channels; the Germans called this ‘internal pluralism’. From the 1960s

onwards, with the expansion of television, quite often a special remit was given to particular channels as well. Thus in Britain, for instance, the higher brow BBC 2 was introduced in 1964 so that BBC 1 could become more popularly orientated and compete with ITV.” (p.130).

With regard to the matter of external and internal pluralism, Iosifidis (2008), referring to the case of Spain (a country that has a lot in common with the Greek market), argues: “As far the debate on internal/external pluralism is concerned in the large country of Spain, there are no rules for the participation of independent content providers in public television. In fact, a few production companies take most of the cake...” (p.187). With regard to countries that present common features – an issue which is discussed in the second chapter as well, in the context of studying content in small nations – Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002) argue that Southern Europe’s, namely Greek, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, media systems show certain similarities that differentiate them from the systems of other European countries. According to the authors, these common features are not arbitrary but they were gradually formed as a result of the similar historical frameworks of these countries. A typical example they refer to, with regard to the institutional framework of news content in Spain and in Greece, is the following: “Spain and Greece, meanwhile, are the two countries remaining in Western Europe in which the ruling party directly controls public broadcasting. In both countries the management of the news divisions of public television changes with a change in government, and the news is at important moments mobilized to support the government politically” (p.180).

From this examination of the conceptual approaches, it can be concluded that there is an interaction and a convergence between external and internal pluralism, which leads to the formation of content and content diversity. Further clarifying this point, this interaction is focused along specific axes. For instance, the connection between pluralism and diversity can be identified exactly at this point: The formation of external pluralism, that is, ownership pluralism, ultimately affects the way internal pluralism, namely the content, is formed. This is also illustrated by the findings from the empirical data of this research, where it is shown that the production process and market production practices affect schedule forming as well. Nonetheless, it is not clear whether this interactive relation between external and internal factors that shape content has positive or negative effects on the content, as well as to what extent these factors interact with each other. Beyond that point, the internal aspects of content are examined from the perspective of diversity. For instance, genres and their classification is

an issue which, when approached using the concept of diversity, is viewed as measurable; not as a theoretical concept, which is the case when it is examined using the idea of pluralism. The European Commission has expressed its view on the connection between external and internal pluralism and in general on the issue of correlating ownership status with content: “Pluralism of ownership ... is a necessary but not sufficient condition for ensuring media pluralism. Media ownership rules need to be complemented by other provisions ... Media pluralism, in our understanding, implies all measures that ensure citizens’ access to a variety of information sources, opinion, voices etc. in order to form their opinion without the undue influence of one dominant opinion forming power” (EC, 2007: 5). On the other hand, increasing external pluralism will not necessarily bring about pluralistic content, since this action may incur a negative outcome with regard to the content (Collins, 2010). Klimkiewicz (2008) argues along the same lines that: “The frequently drawn distinction between external ‘plurality of autonomous and independent media’ and internal ‘diversity of media contents available to the public’ revealed a problematic relationship between the two dimensions. Namely, the research has not so far unanimously proved that a strong link between plurality of ownership and diversity of content is casual and direct” (p.82).

The important point in this debate, is the way the two forms of pluralism – internal and external – are connected to content and consequently to content diversity. After all, the subject-matter of this thesis is the content and in what manner and to which degree it is formed as a result of diversity.

Cavallin (1998), referring to the relation of pluralism to content, mentions the definition of pluralism, provided by the Council of Europe: “...the notion of pluralism is understood to mean the scope for a wide range of social, political and cultural values, opinions, information and interests to find expression through the media. Pluralism may be internal in nature, with a wide range of social, political and cultural values, opinions, information and interests finding expression within one media organization, or external in nature, through a number of such organizations, each expressing a particular point of view” (p.3).

Cavallin mentions the case of the former Soviet Union, in order to support his view that, quite often, pluralism is developed due to various reasons, for example, according to political expediencies. He concludes that the concept of pluralism is directly associated with content, referring to the Council of Europe’s above-mentioned definition: “The working definition

suggests that pluralism should, in this context, only relate to content. Therefore, external pluralism is also defined in relation to a pluralism of content...” (p.4).

In order to clarify the concept of television pluralism and, in general, of media pluralism, we must understand the broader frameworks, within which different television systems – and consequently their content production – operate. This is necessary, because every television system perceives its pluralistic tendencies in a different way. Goodman and Price (2008), discussing this matter, claim: “The expectations for public television with respect to media pluralism can only be understood against a background of the US broadcast television in general.” (p.191). The authors refer to the issue of localism in US broadcasting, as an interesting example which is directly associated with pluralism. Pluralistic localism in the media is an issue which has not been discussed extensively at the European level or even in smaller countries, such as Greece, whether because localism is perceived in a different way than in the US television system, or due to the fact that it is not a priority for policy makers.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of diversity, as well as pluralism, is directly associated with the process of the deregulation of television, since the latter affects media programming as well. At this point, it is worth elaborating on the various incarnations of the concept of internal pluralism, so as not to cause confusion, as this concept was mentioned previously in this study. Internal pluralism was present in television before its deregulation, since it was initially developed as a concept for public television. Broadly speaking, during deregulation, internal pluralism changed form, since the commercialization of television, which is a feature of deregulation, altered the way channels plan their scheduling and programming strategies. The feature that was directly affected by the deregulation of television was external pluralism, due to the changes that occurred with regard to the ownership status of channels, as well as at the level of production, with the creation of production companies and the commercialization of content. Papathanassopoulos (1993) argues that: “Assigning work to the private sector is an act which indicates that one or more businesses – however, not all of them – which until now were protected by state’s de jure monopoly, move away from the relevant public organisation and are assigned to private companies. In other words, the state, instead of using its own body, employees and technical equipment for programming production, now has the possibility to address to private producers” (p.52).

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<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that historically the concept of external pluralism was introduced to accommodate deregulation – i.e. it was argued that as technology enables multichannel television and narrowcasting, there was less of a need to insist on internally diverse generalist broadcasters. The assumption was the system as a whole could provide genuine choice.

The concept of deregulation is referred to throughout this thesis and this is why it is presented in the introduction. In fact, content diversity and, more specifically, its development were affected by the deregulation of the medium, in this case, television, given that television deregulation transformed the logic of the content. Papathanassopoulos (1997), referring to the relation of television deregulation and content, focusing on the case of Greek television, argues: "...Greece has undergone a broadcasting commercialization, adopting a market solution with more channels, more advertising, more programme imports and more politics" (p.352). Deregulation was not a one-way process that affected only the degree of content diversity; rather, it had a chain reaction on the market. For instance, it broadened the advertising market or the market for domestic and foreign programme production. The franchising of telenovelas (Spanish soap operas) for example is a consequence of the deregulation process. Watson and Hill (2000), studying the concept of deregulation, write that: "Deregulation describes the process whereby channels of communication, specifically radio and television, are opened up beyond the existing franchise-holders. Another term in current use, 'privatization', emphasizes the practical nature of the shift, from public to commercial control..." (p.86). The authors (2000), in order to illustrate the concept of deregulation, discuss the decision of the British Government in 1982 to allow competition between the private sector and British Telecom, referring in particular to the company, Mercury, joining the market.

Iosifidis (2005) describes deregulation as a process which allowed the media market to expand from the state to the private sector: "For most of its history the media and telecommunications sector has been run as a state-owned regulated monopoly, but markets opened up to competition throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Accompanying these trends was a process of deregulation, leaving competitive market forces to determine the shape of the sector. The debate around mergers and acquisitions and competition policy is very much related to this" (p.107). As such, the concept of content diversity appeared as a direct consequence of the deregulation of the media market, in particular of television. One of the most interesting issues here is the study of the programming development process in the years following deregulation, which also appears in this research. Iosifidis associates competition policy with deregulation, since the latter brought competition to the sector, which consequently affected content diversity, given that, due to competition, various rationales regarding production methods were introduced, such as those based on production costs and programming genres. Anderson (1999) discusses deregulation in the context of the

competitive market, as the final product reaches a wide group of consumers. According to Anderson, their needs will be satisfied by lower costs, since the market behaves competitively: “Deregulation is associated with another much misused word, “efficiency”. Market economics doublespeak has it that efficiency means a “market efficiency”, born of vigorous competitive markets which drive down prices, and profits, and which will benefit the great mass of consumers” (p.5). By contrasting this reference to the mass consumption of products with the case of television, it is clear that the deregulation of television created a new audience, since the new programming composition and enrichment – which is called content diversity – formed new tendencies both with regard to programming and viewers’ preferences. For instance, before deregulation there were really few hours in a channel’s programming, while afterwards, a boom in television hours occurred (Waisbord, 2004).

Papathanassopoulos (1993) also refers to the idea of commercialization and in particular to the issue of the commercialization of television content as a consequence of deregulation. Papathanassopoulos (1993) associates this issue with advertising and defines commercialization as a process, whereby television becomes dependent on advertising revenue. Focusing on content production, Papathanassopoulos (1993) specifically argues: “In fact, the new European map of television depicts more channels, more intense competition, more advertisements and plenty imported programmes, primarily from the US [...]. The competition, aiming at the highest viewer ratings, has led even public television to stop acting as an agent of public social service, given that the majority of public channels adopt similar strategies with their private competitors” (p.57).

In order to historically account for the case of Greek television, before our further analysis, it should be noted that in Greece, deregulation procedures started in the 1980s. Various political developments and changes that occurred around this time delayed deregulation, which eventually took place in 1989,<sup>3</sup> when the first two private television channels, MEGA Channel, followed by Antenna, started operating. These two channels are studied empirically later on in this research. Some additional information, with regard to the broader regulatory framework of content in Greece, is discussed in the last subchapter of this chapter.

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<sup>3</sup>Law 1866/1989

### **1.3.2. The concept of diversity: Why is it important to study it?**

Diversity is considered as being a measurable concept associated with the assessment of media content, taking a number of parameters such as the diversity of opinion, sources that are used and groups that are represented through the media output. There are several parameters that could make diversity a measurable concept and it could not be argued that diversity can be assessed one-dimensionally, for instance only with regard to programming genres. Diversity comprises a complex of parameters, which are sometimes interconnected, while others occur independently. This is also supported by a report from the University of Trento, which, broadly speaking, classifies the dimensions of diversity as follows: diversity of sources, diversity of resources, diversity of topic, diversity of speakers/actors/opinion holders, diversity of opinions, diversity of genre, diversity of language, geographical diversity and temporal diversity (Maltese, et al., 2009). Schultz (2005) wrote a working paper dealing with media diversity as a measuring concept. This paper is concerned with the debate around finding an acceptable metric for the assessment of content diversity. The paper was included in the agenda of the Federal Communications Commission – the FCC is discussed in the third chapter, where various approaches, established by the FCC through papers and public consultations, are presented. Schultz (2005) concludes that diversity – as a measurable concept – is constantly changing, mainly due to internet technological advances, such as the emergence of internet radios and channels, and he contemplates whether the ongoing discussion about content diversity within the context of media capitalism could eventually lead towards a globally, or at least partially accepted, methodological formula for the assessment of media diversity.

As with the case of pluralism, there are a number of interesting definitions within the literature, which place diversity within conceptual contexts and approach it as a measurable concept. Karppinen's definition, based on the heterogeneity of media content, is one such example:

In a wider sense, media diversity aims at finding the heterogeneity which may be defined in different ways and at the same time refers to different aspects of the media as sources, outputs, opinions and any other aspects related to the media (Karppinen 2006, p.60).



This means that diversity can refer to the extent to which media content reflects and serves various public interests and opinions, or it can refer to the general diffusion of media power in society on the level of ownership, economic structures and political influence. Nevertheless, heterogeneity – which is mentioned in Karppinen’s definition – can be detected with the use of a number of parameters and is not only indicative of the diversity of opinion. For instance, heterogeneity can be detected, hence assessed, in the distribution of programming genres, an issue which is extensively dealt with in the following chapters. It can also be detected at the source level. Source diversity, which is an issue of concern for the following chapters of this research, within the context of media concentration, has also been extensively studied. So far, opinion or viewpoint diversity is one of the most popular issues among researchers working on discussions about measurement and assessment methodology for content diversity. Opinion diversity or viewpoint diversity or diversity of voices, as an indicator of the degree of content diversity is probably one of the most debated issues of concern in this research, within the context of diversity. Viewpoint diversity is addressed theoretically in the following chapter and presented empirically in the third chapter. The polysemy and the various definitions of television content diversity make it a crucial issue in the study of content (Karppinen, 2006).

Petros Iosifidis (2009) attributed the problematic nature of interpreting diversity to its polysemy, since, as he argues, diversity can refer to several things, such as freedom of ideas and expression of voices, programming availability with regard to genres and formats, or production source variety, for example, in the case of independent productions. The polysemy of diversity not only hinders its notional clarification but it also raises questions about its methodological applications. Its interpretive polysemy combined with the flexibility that characterizes it, makes diversity a complicated, but, at the same time, quite attractive matter, since it covers a wide research spectrum (Nehring and Puppe, 2002). A point that requires attention is the notional interpretation of diversity in correlation with the absence of common measurement methodologies. The interpretive variations of diversity result in occasional disagreements with regard to the way diversity assessment is approached (Breuer, 2010).

Iosifidis (2009) referring to the methodologically problematic nature of measuring diversity, reaches the following conclusions:

- Surprisingly, there is little real research, academic review or agreed measurements on concentration (and diversity),

- There are no universal measuring methodologies, and
- The appropriate measure depends on the objective of the measurement – what is the purpose of the measurement: the examination of economic power or an assessment of whether the market structure restricts diversity in the media industry? (2009).

The above-mentioned challenges of measuring or generally assessing diversity may appear to contrast with the previous analysis of the concept, regarding its quantification. Nonetheless, it should be clarified that the commonly accepted view of the problematic dimension of diversity, with respect to measuring methodologies, is an issue that appears throughout this discussion. The fact that it can determine a methodological framework for the assessment of the degree of content diversity does not negate its problematic dimension.

From both of the above definitions, it can be seen that diversity as a concept is marked by a broadness concerning the way it is approached, which is largely related to how the researcher defines it through the various approaches. In other words, it depends on the choice of the components upon which the research, attempting to assess the degree of diversity, is based. Nevertheless, the fact remains that diversity, as opposed to the abstract notion of quality – where the problem is clearly semantic – is a measurable concept and covers issues that a researcher would like to examine. For instance, Iosifidis (1997), referring to the issue of measuring media concentration – this will be analysed in a following chapter as source diversity – presents the problematic nature of measuring within specific contexts, since, he argues, firstly there should be a definition of the markets,<sup>4</sup> to which any measurement or assessment will apply. Iosifidis (1997) uses two parameters for this delimitation; firstly, the specification of the geographical market and secondly of the product market. With regard to the first parameter, that is the geographical market, Iosifidis claims that the delimitation of the market size affects the final measurable results and, for this reason, the geographical boundaries should be specified, prior to any attempt at measurement. In the same way, the delimitation of the product market is equally important for Iosifidis (1997), therefore, the features of the market to be examined should be specified from the beginning.

It is crucial for these delimitations, as set out by Iosifidis (1997), to be determined before using any measuring methodology, because they place the measurement within specific contexts and they clarify a priori what is to be studied, what its features will be and to which

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<sup>4</sup>This is not only claimed by Iosifidis, it is a broadly accepted approach, adopted by researchers who study market concentration. More specifically, it is a fundamental concept of Competition Law/Policy, where the geographic definition is quite frequently part of the broader market definition (Office of Fair Trading, 2004).

markets or media products the measurement can be applied. It is important to clarify that these delimitations define the scope that is the outline of the research, without measuring or assessing anything, in contrast with the variables. The variables are the elements that constitute a methodology (however, the variables do not constitute the methodology on their own; rather they are a part of it) and they are basically the measuring indicators that are used to draw the results. For instance, genre analysis or the case of source diversity is examples of such methods of measurement and assessment.

The main aim here is to detect what it is exactly that makes the diversity of television content an important, useful and also contemporary research issue. This must be done in order for us to study it in this research as well. As previously mentioned the lack of a widely accepted formula for approaching diversity, whether conceptually or methodologically, makes it a rather interesting concept. This, however, is a general observation regarding diversity and does not account for its usefulness, and thus why it is necessary to develop a methodology, a tool, which can be applied in certain television environments. Apart from that, the rationale for conducting this research is found in the following fact: nowadays, the study of the diversity of content is more necessary than ever, since technological advances continuously redefine television as a medium. Moreover, economic and market developments, the wider economic crisis and social changes that consequently come about clearly affect the television market and content. As will be discussed below, there are various additional factors associated with diversity, such as the process of programming categorization, which are affected, for instance, by technological advances and changes in television and which should affect researchers operating in this field, as well as the production process, which is influenced by economic developments and, consequently, affects the diversity of content. Furthermore, on a social level, the assessment of the degree of diversity can be a useful tool, from the perspective of the concept of viewpoint diversity, namely as to how the content incorporates opinions reflected in society. Besides from categorization issues and the way they are linked to diversity, it is also important for the assessment of diversity to be examined. This can allow researchers to draw conclusions regarding content homogeneity or heterogeneity and to explore how diversity can be used as a tool for the detection of content differentiation between channels, which can be used as a tool for comparative content studies between channels. In order for the process of television content assessment to be understood, the parameters that make up the concept of diversity need to be clarified. What is essentially assessed in this research and presented in the research queries that follow, is the way genres

form the degree of diversity, the way viewpoint diversity contributes to that – primarily in journalistic content – and the extent to which source diversity co-shapes content. In other words, an introspection of its conceptual approach is necessary, so that the elements that constitute or that could constitute diversity are examined, leading to conclusions as to whether diversity could be a useful tool for the assessment of television content and how it can contribute to the broader study of television content. This need stems from the fact that, even today, content diversity remains an abstract and quite often challenging issue. For instance, when the types and genres of a particular programming schedule are assessed, does this mean that, at the same time, the degree of content diversity and its total outflow is assessed? Conversely, when content diversity is examined, what exactly is being examined? In addition, when the production sources are studied, what is the effect that these have on the outflow of the degree of content diversity? Towards this end, there is still no clear and commonly accepted answer as to which elements ultimately constitute the concept of content diversity.

In this research, diversity is approached using empirical analyses and a multi-levelled study is conducted, aiming, as much as possible, to examine the emergence of and then delineate all the elements that can potentially compose the nucleus of an overall and complete study of content diversity. In other words, a chain process is constructed using empirical approaches for the study of diversity. In the fourth chapter, the methodological dimension of this process is presented in detail. In chapters five, six, seven and eight, the empirical approach of this research is analysed and applied, and in the conclusion, the process is summarized and additional ideas are presented regarding future research and applications, as well as some thoughts about possible limitations.

The point in question is, thus, not whether content diversity is a measurable concept or not – something that the above approaches clearly show – but to study both aggregately and separately the components that constitute diversity and the way they interact. For example, is studying genre diversity enough for the researcher to draw conclusions regarding the degree of diversity? What structures can construct a cohesive approach to content diversity? This sort of clarification will allow researchers to obtain a complete understanding, firstly of the way television diversity functions and consequently of the channels,<sup>5</sup> through which it can be approached and assessed. In this research, we attempt to clarify the concept of diversity, as well as consider it through the process of programming production and planning, by

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<sup>5</sup>In this research, the term “channel” refers to a television channel, which broadcasts content structured into genres and programme zones to the viewers. We are concerned with free-to-air television and not other types, such as pay television.

employing empirical approaches which are analysed in the fourth chapter (methodology chapter). The analysis of the way diversity is approached – whether at an empirical or a theoretical level – is presented in detail in the third chapter, where several empirical approaches are discussed.

The methodological approach to examining the diversity of television content faces challenging issues in four areas: technology-based problems, methodology-based problems, a multiplicity of players and application-based problems. These four axes constitute the basis and framework behind the rationale of this research. These four axes underpin the development of the process of assessing diversity that is suggested in this research, as well as the whole discussion, both on the theoretical and empirical level. In other words, they constitute the basis for conducting this study. The convergence of technology and the development of new tools of communication make interpreting the concept of diversity particularly difficult but at the same time more necessary than ever. Studies typically treat television as the only medium and should move towards a broader technological spectrum and examine digital and online forms of television content. By referring to methodological problems, this research mainly focuses on programming type classification and categorization procedures, which are discussed in detail below. These are partially associated – as mentioned before – with technological advances in the field, an issue that is discussed in the conclusion as well, with regard to future research in television. The absence of a common formula for classification – an issue that mostly arises from the different television environments – is a significant obstacle for methodological approaches to diversity. In addition, the complexity of the concept causes further difficulties, mainly with regard to the components and subcomponents that make diversity a methodologically measurable concept. With regard to the multiplicity of players, the participation of many players in the process of developing television content creates both extrinsic and intrinsic factors which obstruct the formation of a solid policy that will ensure diversity of content. A typical example is the production process and the way the bidirectional relationship between production companies and channels affects – at least to some extent – the degree of diversity. Other players include advertisers, who have their own role in the television industry. Finally, application-based problems, which are a consequence of the above-mentioned issues, concern the different application approaches used in different market contexts and more generally to different nations, due to their distinct characteristics and particularities. Even if a study attempts to come up with a common formula, focusing exclusively on small nations, they will also face

difficulties, since there are particular parameters with respect to each country, such as the language and viewers' habits. As regards small nations, the discussion presented in the next chapter approaches the issue from a theoretical perspective.

Picard (2001) in his project on the study of diversity in relation to the financial dimension of content, distinguishes four, particularly interesting, strategic dimensions, which form the outline of his research. These are the following: media structure and economics, media strategies and operations, media content, and future media developments. The first dimension – media structure and economics – is used by Picard (2001) to describe the media industry and the structures and trends of the market, such as the factor of competition and the internal financial issues faced by media companies. The second dimension deals with media conduct, that is, it examines both the tendencies of the consuming audience and of employees in the field of communications, while it also studies issues of cultural and public policy strategies. Picard's third dimension deals with the content. More specifically, it studies the quantitative and qualitative manifestation of content, and assesses the range of topics covered by the media. Lastly, Picard discusses the future of his project and, in particular, he focuses on the way future developments will affect the structures and the finances of the existing media, as well as on the new opportunities that might be created and the problems that might be caused by this influence on media content.

The dimensions that frame Picard's (2001) project differ from the axes that outline this research, which focuses mainly on application issues with regard to the content and not on studying or describing the field of media, although, as mentioned in the discussion about small nations in the next chapter, in order for a methodological approach to diversity to be possible, the field within which it will be applied should be understood. This is the reason why, both in the theoretical and the empirical chapter, the discussion mainly revolves around the aspect of applying diversity, such as programming categorization, which is an issue that concerns the content and consequently the application of the methodology for the assessment of the degree of the diversity of the content. The element of application-based problems is developed along the same lines, because methodology is inextricably connected with application. Furthermore, the factor of the multiplicity of players affects the methodology, which – in this research – connects the various basic features that deal with content production, from the source to the television receiver. Therefore, the relationships that are

formed between the players, who affect the whole process, are an important factor in this research.

Based on the above axes that provide the basic framework for this study, the research questions are divided into three levels and the case of Greek television is studied. The first level of analysis focuses on programming genres and how these are formed within the context of the programming schedule. The second level deals with viewpoint diversity in news bulletins and the third studies source diversity, which is the production field. In the following chapter, the issues with which this thesis is concerned are discussed; however, before that, the three main research questions of the thesis should be recapitulated and divided into sub questions:

1. In what way is genre diversity formed within television programming and to what degree do genres affect the outflow of diversity?
2. Does the dimension through which viewpoint (opinion) diversity is assessed affect the degree to which it affects the content?
3. What are the factors that constitute source diversity and in what way does source diversity affect the forming of total content diversity?

In promotion of ideas and opinions

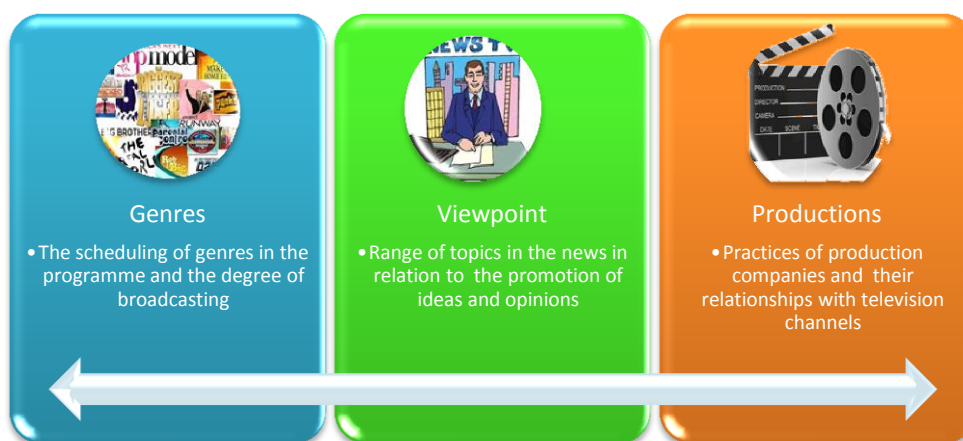


Figure 1. 1: Introduction diagram: The first stage of this research, before the analysis of the research questions, divides the empirical research into three levels. Studying genres with regard to their scheduling; news coverage and, lastly, production and the strategies adopted. The three research levels are presented in this diagram.

The above research questions, on their own, seem general and abstract, especially when referring to diversity of content, since the researcher should firstly define this conceptually in

order to approach it methodologically. In other words, it is a concept which cannot be addressed, unless the researcher clarifies which aspects of diversity he/she wishes to deal with. For instance, assessing the degree of the diversity of content is a non-specific issue, since the way diversity is assessed is also general and abstract. For this reason, the queries are specified by sub questions that place this research within a research and methodological framework. The first question, as to how genre diversity is developed in television programming, contains three sub questions. Firstly, both the horizontal and vertical forming of television programming in regard to genre outflow is studied; secondly, a comparative analysis of the channels under examination, with respect to genre distribution, is conducted and, finally, the correlation between domestic and foreign (imported) production is analysed. The second main question of this research refers to viewpoint diversity and also consists of three sub questions: Firstly, what does news coverage consist of? In other words, the question examines the diversity of the range of topics in news bulletins. Secondly, in what manner and to what extent are individual persons or groups and political parties represented in the programming and, in particular, in the main news bulletins that this research examines? Finally, the third sub question looks at the time spent (temporal distribution) on social issues or the time spent on political issues, which is a comparative question and concerns the development of viewpoint diversity, in the period before and after the economic crisis in Greece. The study of the way time is distributed among topics or even people in the media is a supporting feature for the assessment of diversity. Depending on the time provided to a certain topic compared to the time spent on another topic, more accurate conclusions can be drawn in regard to the actual degree of diversity of content in the news. Lastly, the third main question, which deals with source diversity, looks specifically at the following parameters: The relation between production companies and channels, namely, whether mergers occur, the ratio of in-house productions to those assigned to production companies outside the channel and the question also asks what part independent producers play in the broader process of content production.

These questions are analysed with respect to their methodology in the fourth chapter of this research. The methodological chapter is divided into three parts, as per the main research question of this thesis. In the first part, the methodological approach to genre diversity is explained, the second part deals with the methodological approach to viewpoint diversity and the third part studies the methodological approach to source diversity.



Finally, we seek to conceptually define content, since it constitutes the nucleus of this research. As was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, content, like diversity, is a complex and confusing concept and it can contain within it several aspects. When, for example, we speak of television content, we are referring to what the viewer's perceive from what they watch on their screen as content, namely the programming or the shows. However, content is a broader concept and it incorporates various elements. For instance, one element may refer to news content or the content of a part of a programme or a movie, even advertisements are included in content. In this research, content is defined as the audio-visual material that is produced by its source and is used by television channels for consumption by viewers via their television receivers.

#### **1.4. Public and private television content in Greece**

In order to understand television content, the institutional framework in which content is produced and functions should firstly be explained. When, for instance, the cultural and educational qualities of public television are discussed, we need to know from where these concepts originate. They stem from specific institutions, which establish the boundaries of content. Public televisions channels in Greece (ET1, NET, and ET3) are controlled supervised and funded by the state and do not face sustainability problems. Consequently, at least theoretically, they see the viewer as a receiver of several political, social and cultural messages instead of a consumer (Karakostas, 2005). The principles imposed by article 15§2, both in the previous and the reviewed constitution, regarding “the objective transmission, on equal terms, of information and news reports, as well as of works of literature and art”, are a step in this direction.

Furthermore, television programming transmitted by ERT-S.A. ought to be inspired by the values of freedom, democracy, national independence, peace and friendship between nations, and, simultaneously, they should be ruled by the principles of the objectivity, completeness and topicality of the information provided, polyphony, a high quality of programming broadcast, protection of the Greek language, respect for the value of individuals and their privacy, and the protection and spreading of Greek culture and Greek traditions (Karakostas, 2000). However, according to Karakostas (2005), the actions taken by public television with regard to these principles have not always been successful.

Conversely, television programming is not only a cultural good, but is also a product to be sold.

Consequently, the business men that control private television channels modify television content in order to achieve the highest possible number of viewers and the highest possible viewing ratings in return for the minimum of investment. For this reason, they often sacrifice multiplicity, quality and polyphony for the sake of commercialization. In the second chapter, the distinction between content as a business product or a public good is extensively discussed.

The economic structure of the mass media affects content, since, according to the theory of political economy, the way an industry provides for its income has an impact upon the type of messages it produces. This means that if economic factors encourage the production of one type of content to the detriment of another type, then it is certain that the media will produce products that they deem most profitable (Albarran, 1996; Papathanassopoulos, 2005; Demertzis, 2005).

Besides, it is obvious that before the advent of private television in Greece, the main element that prevailed was information, while public television was also frequently used as a tool for propaganda. However, with the advent of private television channels, the political television model has been abandoned and television programming is now dominated by entertainment and amusement. In other words, private television is driven almost exclusively by economic concerns, something that did not happen with public television (Tsourvakas, 1996), despite the fact that private companies are also subject to public regulation (Tsourvakas, 2003).

When submitting an application to the National Radio and Television Council to obtain a license to operate a private television channel, the company has to state the main form and content of its programming (Karakostas, 2000), since completeness of the programming is one of the four criteria necessary for an operating licence to be granted or renewed.

In order to assess applicants, the already mentioned criterion of completeness of the programming has to be fulfilled, for which the experience, knowledge and abilities of the heads of programming, the abilities of the co-operators of the channel, the development of programming as regards information, education and entertainment, and programming quality (both for channels that target one of the above sectors or for one of the forms of word or art) are taken into consideration. The channel should also abide by the codes of journalistic ethics

regarding programming and advertisements. Everything is assessed by the Council and evaluated on a scale from one to ten (Karakostas, 2000).

Legal restrictions, as far as television programming is concerned, cover the following areas: Works whose original language is Greek, and are broadcast by private channels and public television should occupy a percentage larger than 25% of the total broadcasting time. This broadcasting time does not include news programmes, sporting events, game shows, advertisements or telexes services. Furthermore, for hearing-impaired people, television channels have to include a news broadcast in sign language, the duration of which should be at least five minutes long, and there should also be subtitles provided. At least once every night there should also be an informative, entertaining or educational programme in sign language for hearing-impaired viewers. The duration of such broadcasts should be at least half an hour and there should also be subtitles provided. Finally, television channels have to broadcast messages of social content free of charge every day, particularly programmes related to health, welfare and care for disabled people. Their duration should be two minutes.

Programmes transmitted by television channels, especially news and programmes dealing with political dialogue, should ensure political pluralism and present the opinions of different political parties<sup>6</sup> for every issue under political debate. They also have to broadcast European works, which should occupy at least 51% of the broadcasting time. For the correct application of this article, European works are considered works that are produced in member states of the European Union, works that are produced in third European States that participate in the European Convention on Transfrontier Television of the Council of Europe and works that are produced in third European third countries that meet the requirements of article 10 §4 of the P.D. 100/2000.

Furthermore, television channels should make sure that 10% of their yearly broadcasting time is dedicated to works made by independent producers, as defined by article 10 of Law 2328/95. This percentage does not include news programmes, sporting events, advertising or telemarketing messages (Article 10, §7 of the P.D. 100/2000.).

All versions of the constitution during the post-junta period established commercial arrangements for all electronic media. Such arrangements are based on respect for different opinions and the formation of public opinion (Karakostas, 2005). In other words, not only

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<sup>6</sup>Polyphony deals only with the parties represented in the Greek Parliament and the European Parliament, not all parties in general.

public television channels but also private ones have a certain number of obligations or conditions that they have to comply with in order to obtain an operating license (McQuail, 2003), even though such conditions may restrict their freedom.

Finally, it should be noted that when talking about any media market, the goal of content is not exclusively to attract consumers but also advertisers who represent a component of the economic system and wish to have access to consumers through the media (Doyle, 2002). It is also mentioned that advertisers play a significant and increasing role in the formation of media content (Herman and McChesney, 2001; Fortunato, 2005; Einstein, 2004). Nevertheless, as far as television advertising and subsidies are concerned, the constitution of 2001 did not make any change to the existing provisions, which are based largely on European legislation.

In light of these contextual considerations, the amendment to the constitution that took place in 2001 seems not to have managed to lift freedom of communication on radio and television to the level of a constitutional individual right that would be seen as part of the right to freedom of speech and have the same standing as the freedom of the press. If the suggestion made by the Constitutional Review Commission, which provided for the extension of constitutional safe guards to deal with the press and other audio-visual products, had been voted upon, private radio and television activity would have received the highest possible constitutional protection. Furthermore, the current global tendency to minimize the differences between different kinds of media would have been confirmed, not only at the level of technological equipment, but also at the level of regulation.

According to Kiki (2003), “the freedom of expression and the freedom of information in their active and passive version are unbreakable parts of audio-visual freedom. And it is certain that only institutionally free audio-visual media can be the platform that can be used for activities related to their role and mission such as expression and information. Thus, provided that the freedom of expression rules constitutionally every activity related to audio-visual media, according to the disposition of article 14 §1 of both the former and the revised version of the constitution, the right to the freedom of information had to be clearly stated so that the circle of the constitutionally protected activities related to the freedom of the audio-visual media could be completed” (Kiki, 2003, p.126).

It was unfortunate that the revised version of the constitution did not abolish direct state control over radio and television broadcasting. Moreover, the extension of the safeguards in the field should have led to control being handed over to the NRTC. This supervision would have dealt with licences, the content of rules on ethics, the protection of individuals and respect for the dignity of citizens. Furthermore, the provisions of the revised version of the constitution against the “conflicts”, which were voted upon under very negative conditions, reflect the suspicion and reticence of citizens and politicians towards conflicts among statesmen and politicians, the capital and the media.

Whatever the circumstances, the smooth running of the media engenders the smooth running of democracy. A coherent public policy should be formed again for the Greek communication system. The conflict between constitutionally standardized and democratically controlled political authority, and the various non-standardized influential forms, which finally became a new authority, are crucial factors indicating the sufficiency and stability of contemporary post-industrial democracies. A problem that every modern democracy has to face is the illicit use of information media, whereby certain actors seeking to facilitate their commercial activities (especially business dealings with the wider public sector) or aiming to exercise specific influence, through content output, on public opinion in favour of particular parties, persons, opinions, goals or situations at local, regional, national or international levels.

Those controlling electronic media formats, especially television, have obtained great and, in many cases, uncontrollable financial power, influence over society and symbolic power, and participate actively in the process of forming public opinion. They rule the public sphere competitively, aiming to make a profit, and impose social and political awareness. These multiple public functions that coexist and interact with each other – and they are public not through delegation – prevail and stigmatize the constitutional right to freedom of radio and television communication. They intermingle with it and commit to the exercise of this right, which becomes greater immediately after its creation due to social responsibilities and commitments that create functional restrictions.

Against the backdrop of this concept and because of the reasons stated above, the right to television communication becomes a specific individual right that contains features of the right to “participation in the social and political life of the country”. This means that it is a right to participate in the public formation of opinion and the will of citizens. Its wide social and political importance, its definitive role in the formation and functioning of the public

sphere, the danger posed by its methods that threatens many constitutional rights and interests, such as social, economic and ideological pluralism, the objectivity and independence of the media from economic and political authority, the protection of individuals and the privacy of the individual, as well as the protection of minors, are all reasons that justify the vivid interest shown by society regarding the way in which this right should be exercised.

The wide symbolic influence that electronic information media outlets have on the public makes it imperative that their economic activity be ruled by regulations and ongoing public oversight. Once again, the constitution has to design and establish these particular relations between law and freedom, state and private initiative in every form of electronic communication, always bearing in mind that, inevitably, the press, radio and television should be treated similarly (Kiki, 1998).

It is obvious from the analysis presented in this chapter that each European country has always approached and still approaches the reform of their radio and television systems in different ways. As a result, the changes that took place in the European field of communications during the late 1980s and the early 1990s did not occur evenly everywhere. In addition, given significant cultural differences, the magnitude and features of European media markets, as well as the differences among them with regard to their legal and administrative traditions, there is no unique, common ruling model that could be considered appropriate for every European country.<sup>7</sup>

Every member state, Greece included, has to abide by the instructions given by the European Union and relevant laws should be adapted to the new framework of the information society, which includes the ongoing obligation to protect and promote polyphony through the mass media. Considering that the proper functioning of democracy requires diversity of content within the media, viewers should have many options and many different opportunities to access different sources and voices of diversity. Moreover, considering that diversity can only be promoted through transparency and (fair) competition, a way of constitutionally protecting the existence of a free market of ideas within the media, which will create opportunities for a new, creative and high quality type of content, should be found.

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<sup>7</sup>Media Diversity in Europe; report prepared by the AP-MD (Advisory Panel to CDMM on media concentrations, pluralism and diversity questions), Strasbourg, December 2002.

However, the way television should operate and the way it actually operates are two quite different issues from an ideological perspective, and they can be interpreted in different ways – the process of selecting television content should be more democratic. This statement may sound simplistic, yet it confirms that there is a huge gap between theory and practice.

In the following chapter, issues that are of concern for and outline this research are discussed theoretically.

## **CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL DISCUSSION**

In this chapter, the main issues that constitute the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis are discussed. As previously mentioned in the introductory chapter, this thesis deals with the concept of diversity with a methodological examination. Consequently, this framework is of significance for the theoretical basis of the thesis. More specifically, institutional diversity is discussed, as well as the case of small nations and the practical challenges of assessing diversity in these countries. Furthermore, the issue of the programming strategies of different channels is considered alongside a discussion of the policy aspect of diversity, in the context of the perception of content as a public good. Finally, the concepts of viewpoint diversity and people diversity are analysed and source diversity is discussed on a theoretical level.

### **2.1. Institutional diversity and conceptual delimitation**

One of the issues discussed in the introductory chapter is that of delimiting the concept of diversity so as to make it measurable. Institutional diversity is a concept which can help place diversity within a specific framework for reasons that will be analysed below. The origin of the concept of institutional diversity lies in institutional theory and analyses that deal with the study and development of the functions of institutions. Institutions are the structural components of a society and analysing them involves a number of parameters which can describe their conditions, socio-political and historical contexts, and notions adequately (Peters, 2005). Moreover, Aoki (1996) argues that market systems comprise various institutional arrangements. The logical question here is how this issue relates to the present study of the diversity of television content and, more generally, how institutional processes affect the formation of media content: Institutional diversity in a theoretical setting requires the management of a range of issues that may affect and form the character of the diversity of the television landscape. The concepts of external (structural) and internal pluralism that were analysed in the previous chapter are directly associated with institutional processes. For instance, in the case of external pluralism, the market players and the number of outlets are derivatives of the institutional nature of a specific country. In an authoritarian regime, for example, where the institutional framework is regulated by military elite, the way external pluralism is shaped will also be affected. As a direct consequence, internal pluralism, namely



the content,<sup>8</sup> will be formed accordingly. In other words, media organizations operate within the institutional framework of the geographical area in which they are established. Tolbert and Zucker (1996) analyse the different institutional structures within which various organizations operate and they claim that the methodology concerning this issue is highly problematic, since there are limited approaches that can be applied to assess institutional processes. Now let us return to content diversity; from an institutional perspective, it is formed via three variables: a) the legislative framework b) the socio-political context and c) the indicators used to assess the policies and the legal tools which affect content.

Viewpoint diversity or opinion diversity, as it is also called, can be an indicator with which to assess the broader institutional framework (the empirical approach of viewpoint diversity is discussed below as well, where the way, in which viewpoint diversity is studied, is analysed). Conversely, the institutional framework shapes the news and the circulation of ideas and opinions in general. The IREX Index (International Research and Exchanges Board) assesses the institutional framework within which independent media operate, using five axes: “1) legal and social norms that protect and promote free speech...; 2) journalism that meets professional standards; 3) multiple news sources that provide citizens with reliable and objective news; 4) independent media that are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence; 5) supporting institutions that function in the professional interests of independent media” (Becker, Vlad and Nusser, 2004, p.8). Although this specific indicator focuses on the institutional diversity of journalistic practices, by taking a wide spectrum of parameters (such as, inter alia, legal and social models, the professional character of journalism, the multipurpose use of sources, the independence of editors from enterprises and those institutions which support the interests of the independent media) into consideration, it aims to give a clear picture of the level of independence of the media (Becker, Vlad and Nusser, 2004).

Napoli, writing on institutional diversity, discusses the issue from the perspective of the media organizations which produce content. Specifically, he argues: “This idea specifically referred to the need for media organizations that operate under different funding models (commercial, governmental, public/non-profit, etc.) under the assumption that the underlying

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<sup>8</sup>Here, the author refers to the content of a single outlet. External pluralism refers to the content of the system as a whole. It could also be discussed in parallel to external pluralism, since institutional diversity affects the structure of the televisual system, both with regard to specific aspects and more broadly as a whole.

sources of economic support for media outlets have a significant bearing on how they go about producing content” (2008, pers. Comm., 2 June).

One of the issues relating to institutional diversity that arose in this research is the issue of diversity within the study of small nations, since content in these cases acquires particular characteristics stemming from the particularities of small nations. In other words, the geographical boundaries of a country lend specific attributes and particularities to media content.

Iosifidis (1996) explains why it is useful to delineate markets and consequently their media products within geographical boundaries. Specifically, the Iosifidis argues: “The definition of the market-place can have an impact on what is perceived as its structure. The geographical dimension of market definition determines the scope of the market that is, whether markets are defined as being local, regional, national or even international” (p.645).

Examining the issue within the context of small nations is important in this research mainly because of the fact that the empirical approach will focus on the case of Greece and will examine how the study of content within small nations can be approached empirically or if this approach could be applied in different television environments as well. Small nations include, for instance, Greece, Cyprus, Malta and Luxembourg.<sup>9</sup> The important point in such an analysis is – by geographically clarifying the media product – to illustrate the potential of this product. This is what Iosifidis (1996) referred to above, namely that the geographical definition of a product shows the target of a market and defines its structure as well. In other words, Iosifidis means that it is through the geographical definition, that the possibilities of a market become evident. Wildman (1995), for instance, referring to relationships between large and small media markets, claims that it is customary for products to travel from large to small markets. Wildman, in his essay, analyses the structures that exist in this relationship, mostly of an economic nature, such as the size of the market with regard to the number of viewers and the way the rate of consumption affects the numerical indexes of a television production. He also analyses how the various features accorded to television productions – as long as they meet the basic requirements for exporting, such as language – influence the individual consumers, who can select from a wide variety of international sources, to watch them. Picard (2002) mentions the following: “The requirements of the varying types of media operations affect the forms and structures of media firms, as do the scale and scope of those

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<sup>9</sup> These countries are mentioned as examples in order to define this idea notionally.

operations. Because the needs of media differ and because the organizational requirements to create media goods and services vary depending upon their markets, the sizes of media organizations cover the range from small to large” (p.3).

In order to define the concept of a small nation, certain criteria and features should be discussed, which have to do with media content and, with regard to this research in particular, television content. The criteria used in this research to define the idea of ‘small nations’ are the size of the market (the geographical limits of the market), which is measured by participation, and the proportion of the population in the media, that is the slice of the ratings pie (as far as television is concerned) that corresponds to each channel. A typical feature of these small markets is the difficulty they experience in developing a wide range of domestic productions that cover multiple genres, since the market cannot consume them. Another criterion for setting a notional context as regards small nations is the issue of language, which is directly related to the construction and shaping of content diversity. Small nations have the disadvantage of not being able to expand their media content, whether it is television content, news-related content or content of any other type, unlike Anglophone countries that are able to provide their content and services worldwide due to the internationalization of their language. The case of CNN, which is aimed at a wide range of audiences, either through its television broadcasting or through the internet due to its news portal, or the case of the BBC or Australia’s ABC, which place emphasis on the coverage of global news in order to “internationalize” their services, are typical examples of this situation. Therefore, in the case of small nations, the language factor limits their possibilities of exporting media products. Wright (2007) deals with language policy and refers to English, for instance, as a *lingua franca*. Another criterion used to approach the idea of a small nation notionally is the establishment and development of the institutional framework of these countries through time, meaning the historical and socio-political factors that affect the gradual progress of the media and that of the shaping of content. Specifically, in the case of Greece, the procedures that were used in order to manipulate the public radio and television broadcaster in an unstable political climate, the course towards its deregulation, the role of the political parties and the advent of private television with legislative and regulatory gaps, and the failure to establish an independent regulatory body, have greatly affected television content. Finally, a fourth criterion considered in the cases of small nations is what is called the centralization of content. In small countries such as, for instance, Greece or smaller ones, such as Cyprus or Malta, information is more controlled because the level of media concentration is high and

there is an excessive concentration of media ownership by conglomerates run by a small group of businessmen. This is what the study on source diversity in Chapter 7 shows. The result of the excessive concentration of media ownership by conglomerates is that information is controlled by a small group of people and content is shaped according to their own needs and interests. This trend, which is typical in small countries, is known as the centralization of content, since production practices directly affect the content.

Iosifidis, Steemers and Wheeler (2005) refer to the issue of small territories, arguing that small domestic markets are susceptible to the importing of expensive programming, such as dramas, which adversely affects the development of public service television as well. The authors discuss the issue of language and present some indicative examples: “Language is also a factor. Austria, Ireland and Belgium have been affected by overspill broadcasts from same-language neighbours, which can also be received on cable and satellite. In Portugal, Greece, Scandinavia and the Netherlands, languages which are not widely spoken elsewhere have provided a partial barrier to cultural domination by larger neighbours” (p.19).

The general conclusion of this discussion on the conceptual definition of the media market’s geographical delineation is that the market is not independent of content; on the contrary, the content is affected by the market on many levels. The degree of content diversity is directly associated with the individual features of the market, within which diversity is developed. This will also be shown through this research’s empirical analysis and its application to the Greek case. Indicatively, the way in which the market affects genre diversity, the institutional frameworks that lend extra features to the markets and the way they shape both journalistic content diversity, that is, viewpoint diversity, and diversity at the production level will be illustrated. It is particularly interesting to show how trends at the level of content production are developed in a small country with limited exporting possibilities, such as Greece, and how these trends affect and interact with the degree of content diversity.

## **2.2. Organizing television programming in line with business strategies**

An empirical study by Altmeyden, Lantzsch and Will (2007), based on in-person interviews, analyses the processes of producing, broadcasting and distributing television content separately in each market field. In other words, it breaks the processes into segments from the phase of the conception (creative) to the production, distribution and lastly to the “placement” of the content in the channel’s programming. Studying this process is significant, in order to

understand the channels of production, distribution and broadcasting, as well as the method of planning and producing the content as a purely business choice. For instance, one type of content based on a business choice is the “format”, namely programmes with a flexible structure and form, which – due to this “flexibility” – can be reproduced internationally, by adjusting the language or by dubbing them, according to the country that they are going to be broadcast in. Baltruschat (2009) uses the so-called talent or idol shows in her research as a case study, as programming types that are based on franchising and argues that programmes of this kind contain universal elements in their format, specifically so that they can be “exportable” products and that they can be easily adjusted to match the characteristics and the demographic traits of the audience to which they are addressed, without abandoning their original pattern and philosophy.

A typical application of these strategies can be observed in the case of Cyprus, where the television programming greatly depends on the programming of Greek television. The distinctive business feature of these two cases lies in the fact that the Cypriot channels (ANT1, MEGA) operate in Cyprus in a franchising form, since they use the same name and branding as their respective Greek channels and they participate in their share capital. Even though the basis of the programming remains the same, there are differences regarding local productions and news bulletins, a policy which creates a mixed prime time zone with productions from the holding (parent) channel and productions broadcast only on the Cypriot version of the channel. Even though, in this research no comparison with other countries is attempted, this particular case is presented here indicatively, as a typical example of a franchise strategy that directly concerns Greek television.

Based on the above-mentioned examples, media-produced products – the content that is produced – appear, from an economic perspective at least, to be quite peculiar compared to other products. This peculiarity lies mainly in the way the product is consumed by the audience or the readers, because it is a public good and not for immediate consumption. These qualities affect the way content is formed and, as a consequence, the homogeneity of content greatly depends on the tendencies of its consumption, which have to do with the geographical, social and cultural framework within which it is consumed. Content homogeneity is discussed below as it is directly associated with the issue of diversity. With regard to the matter of the qualities held by the media product, namely the content, Olmsted and Chang (2003) identify the following features: “First, media conglomerates offer dual,

complementary media products of content and distribution. Second, media conglomerates rely on dual revenue sources from consumers and advertisers. Third, most media content products are non-excludable and non depletable public goods whose consumption by one individual does not interfere with its availability to another but adds to the scale economies in production. Fourth, many media content products are marketed under a windowing process in which a content such as a theatrical film is delivered to consumers via multiple outlets sequentially in different time periods...Finally, media products are highly subjective to the cultural preferences and existing communication infrastructure of each geographic market...” (p.217). According to Doyle (2002), there are two different products as far as television media are concerned: the television programming that is broadcast to the television receivers of viewers and the television audience viewing that is measured and sold to advertisers. In other words, there are two interdependent parameters which affect the degree of diversity, which is how the programming is formed through the genres that constitute it, and which illustrate simply the commercial perspective of the media. The paradox of the media lies, on the one hand, in the fact that it is not destroyed once “consumed” and, on the other hand, in the fact that, while initial production costs (first copy costs) are high, reproduction costs are low, almost approaching zero. Therefore, the higher the number of viewers of a television programming and the number of this programming’s re-broadcasts, the higher the profit margin of this product in the market. Obviously, this is a rather simplistic approach to the rationale behind the media product. There are a number of issues, such as the case of content franchising, which was mentioned before, and which is not a simple content reproduction, but it is adjusted based on factors, such as the demographic features of the audience and the trends of the target market. In such a discussion about content reproduction, the issue of cultural policy, which is directly linked to content, appears as well. After all, content franchising depends mainly on cultural elements, such as the language of the country that it is targeted at. According to Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), the importance of this discussion emerges from the following: “It is important to realise that the idea that cultural or creative industries might be regenerative was the result of changes in the cultural-industries landscape which were themselves in part the product of cultural policy shifts – when cultural policy is understood in the wider sense, to include media and communications” (p.7). Doyle (2002), referring to the cost of programming distinguishes between two parts: the cost of the producer and the cost of the distributor (channel). The cost of the producer depends on the demand for the content he produces, whereas the cost of the channel is directly linked to the ratings that a programming schedule obtains, therefore this link has successive consequences on the

decisions that are made with respect to the programming schedule, as for example, whether it will continue to be broadcast or in which programming zone it will be included.

The rationale behind the cost of production and the broader process, from the production to the television screen, is based on market competition. This has to be mentioned, given that the financial aspect of content is under discussion. Goettler and Shachar (2001) argue with regard to the financial nature of programming strategies: “In information industries, such as media and entertainment, the strategic choices are primarily nonmonetary product characteristics. Analysis of competition in these industries is often complicated by the presence of unobservable or difficult to measure product characteristics. For example, the relevant attributes of television shows are not obvious” (p.3). Clearly, the issue that arises from this discussion is that of competition and how content is affected within the competitive television market.

Several economic research studies on this issue have identified that the higher the number of television channels provided to viewers, the lower the number of the viewers that will watch each one (Picard, 2001). Moreover, these research studies provide substantial and well-grounded information regarding the reduction in demand for television programming that accompanies an increase in supply (Picard, 2001). Specifically, Picard draws the conclusion that oversupplying channels and programming leads to the fragmentation of the audience into different suppliers (fragmented audiences), the reduction of the channels’ economic gains and a respective increase in competition (Picard, 2001).

The increase in competition can be largely considered “hyper competition”. This term was introduced by Richard D’Aveni as “an environment characterized by intense and fast movements where the competitors must move fast so that they gain an advantage over their rivals” (1994). Specifically, as regards the media, Jacobsson et al. define unreasonable competition as “a market where supply outweighs demand, where a significant number of productions show a loss and depend on external subsidies in order to survive” (2006). Therefore, Jacobsson et al. emphasize the structure of the market, as opposed to D’Aveni, who refers to the strategic behaviour of the participants.

In order to meet the needs of this research, we will focus on competition in connection with the strategy that is followed by each television channel, especially regarding its programming. This means that the structure of the market will not be dealt with regard to its

economic background, but with regard to the behaviour of the medium as far as its schedule planning is concerned. The aim of this approach is to illustrate the strategy followed by television channels regarding their programming under conditions of competition, particularly if they are going to introduce certain innovations in their programming or, in contrast, mimic others, in which case the overall television product turns out to be homogeneous.

The structural theory of television programming suggests that the each channel's programming strategy should aim to maximize its audience size and, consequently, advertising profits (Webster and Wang, 1992). According to this logic, television channels will provide types of programmes that gain the highest possible television audience share figures, leading to a homogeneous result.

In a relevant research study, Gal-Or and Dukes (2003) use a model to prove that media companies have no disincentive to reduce the homogeneity of their television programmes. Dukes and Gal-Or (2003) consider media firm's decisions about the differentiation of programming content and the amount of advertising, respectively. According to the authors, when television channels differentiate products that they provide least of all, producers use less advertising for this product, resulting in less informed consumers and higher profit margins. In other words, when television channels launch homogeneous programmes, they do not advertise them in a way that turns viewers off. Thus, they increase the opportunities for high viewing figures and sell their advertising space more expensively, "muddying the waters" for the viewers and advertisers and, simultaneously, trying to find a way to keep up with the competitive environment of the media. The model of Gal-Or and Dukes (2003) is based on an empirical research study between two channels (called "channels"), two productions, two brand producers – advertisers – and the audience, who are also the consumers of the products. The stages of this model are three-fold: first, each channel decides on the structure of its programming; second, the channels negotiate with the producers on the costs and prices of advertising, and the weight and importance that will be given to the advertisements by the channels as the price of each brand is also defined, and, for the third stage of the model, the study addresses the viewers, or consumers, and how they decide, for instance, on the viewing hours of a channel or how they perceive, understand, use and remember the information they are given about the products (Gal-Or and Dukes, 2003). This model is related to diversity with regard to the process of schedule planning. In other words,



it examines factors, such as the advertisements, which affect schedule planning and consequently the degree of diversity. This model however, could be applied differently in other media markets, since it particularly addresses the US, as the authors note. This model shows the tendencies of television policies in a competitive environment, with the goal of maximizing revenues from advertising, an attitude that prevails in all markets. Beyond that, every televisual system has its own features, such as the differentiation of programming zones, which lead to the time shifting of the programming and can potentially affect some of the model's variables.

By undertaking a secondary analysis of data gathered by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), Jacobson et al. (2006) draw the conclusion that media market competition has little effect, sometimes negative, in the emerging media markets studied. From the very beginning of their research, they argue that hyper-competition produces journalistic products that do not serve society well. Nevertheless, they think that the fact that many media companies compete for very limited resources is of crucial importance (2006). Therefore, Jacobson et al. (2006) argue that competition forces media companies to provide homogenized media content.

In addition, by analysing television homogenization from a strategic point of view, Van der Wurff and Van Cuilenburg (2001) conclude that, up to a point, competition is productive, but after that it leads to the homogenization of the television product. Therefore, the strategic options of a television channel under the conditions of competition are either to focus on a more specific market (niche), which is the case for digital television services, to raise their game, by investing in new productions, or to follow the well-trodden path of offering schedules similar to those of their competitors. The importance of this research thus, lies in the finding that "catastrophic competition" is the basic cause of television content homogeneity. It seems as well that, besides digital television, the niche policy is also used by certain pay television channels, which target a specific television audience.

Following this school of thought, Michael Zhaoxu Yan and Yong Jin Park (2006) conducted an empirical research study using a cross-sectional sample of 231 randomly selected television channels, and concluded that programmes on television channels were concentrated in a handful of types, mainly talk shows, news and daytime soaps. In addition, their finding that market competition is inversely related to the diversity of programming type is very important. In other words, Zhaoxu Yan and Jin Park argue that the more competitive a

market is, the more homogenized the television programming types will be. This means that competition is inversely related to television programming diversity, which is the basic premise of this chapter.

Therefore, considering the above research studies and analyses regarding television programming diversity under conditions of competition, from a notional point of view, content homogeneity is considered as a lack of diversity or low diversity in television programming as far as the variety of genres are concerned, despite the increased number of channels. However, homogeneity can be of different levels and intensity. The level of homogeneity is defined through the relationship between the degree of content homogeneity and the final output, which is defined as content diversity.

The forms of the level of the homogeneity of the content are summarized as follows, according to the ways that it can be studied, classified and assessed:

1. The homogeneity that concerns the horizontal and vertical analysis of a country's television programming, which takes into consideration every type of programming produced in each case. The types of programming are analysed quantitatively, in order to calculate the percentage of homogeneity or heterogeneity.
2. Homogeneity which goes beyond the geographical frontiers of a country, where the television programming of two or more countries may be compared, taking the different programming types into account.
3. Homogeneity in a specific programming type from different countries that is subtitled or dubbed, such as television series like *Friends* and *Sex & the City*.
4. Homogeneity in a specific programming type from different countries that is broadcast after the licensing rights to television series or soaps have been bought – as a franchise – such as the soap opera *Betty La Fea* or reality shows like *Big Brother* (see Chapter 7).
5. Homogeneity in a specific programming type or in more than one programming type, in different countries, by “mimicking” successful television series, mainly American ones, where the **scenario** is strongly based on the **original series**. This

form of homogeneity is called mimetic homogeneity, a notion employed by Benzoni and Bourreau (2001). Papathanassopoulos, with regard to the mimicking techniques and referring to the case of Greek television, claims that the programmers of Greek private television copied the American programming model<sup>10</sup> (e.g., Lead in / lead out etc.) because it was the only one that existed (2008, pers. Comm., 4 March). Papathanassopoulos refers, not to the production, but to structural practices, basically a different concept. However, the difference between production – that is the content – and structure is not an explicit one, since, when a programming genre is scheduled in a specific time zone and the same genre is broadcast at the same time in a competitive channel, then, apart from the structure or the programming policies, there is also mimetic content, that is productions of the same type. For example, when two channels broadcast a police drama at the same time, then there is mimitism of content.

6. Finally, homogeneity in a specific type of television channel occurs in cases where the same television channel broadcasts a programming schedule in different countries. MTV, for instance, is a music channel that produces programmes in many different countries, which are adapted to the language and the local musical tastes of each country. Nevertheless, a lot of MTV shows are the same worldwide and some of them have worldwide popularity – such as the reality show Pimp My Ride. This kind of homogeneity can be observed in the so-called niche channels. ‘One size fits all’ policies, with regard to television content, are an issue related both to diversity and to television scheduling policies. Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann (1994), referring to the concept of ‘one size fits all’ argue that: “...a high market share or ‘one size fits all’ strategy is likely to be profitable only if enough customers have similar preferences” (p.59). According to this statement, content homogeneity, or the opposite, namely content diversity, greatly depends on the audience’s preferences, in order for a programming to be competitive and profitable.

The six forms of content homogeneity are shown in the following analysis of homogeneity in Greek television programming. Using the six points mentioned above it will be argued that content homogeneity has neither a specific form nor can be defined by a specific framework.

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<sup>10</sup>Papathanassopoulos, by programming model, means the structuring (organization) of the programme, namely the scheduling; he is not referring to the production of programmes or anything else (2008, pers. Comm., 4 March).

In addition, homogeneity produces a respective degree of diversity. Homogeneity can have multiple forms, though, which work in different environments accordingly. As will be seen below, through the different studies presented in this research, content homogeneity in Greek television takes the forms that were set out earlier. In addition, it will be noted that the degree of diversity is the effect of these forms, which means that forms of content homogeneity and the proximate causes of this homogeneity lead to the final degree of content diversity. Thus, homogeneity and diversity are not two unrelated concepts; on the contrary, they work in parallel and, as a mathematical equation, provide the final result.

### **2.3. Content as a policy objective: Qualities promoting public good**

In the next chapter, the differences between the approaches that have a policy orientation and those that emerge from taking a business perspective towards content are discussed, and specific empirical approaches are analysed that follow one direction or the other. In this subchapter, we attempt to employ a conceptual approach, within a theoretical framework, to the idea of policy in contrast with business orientation with regard to diversity. The policy approach is theoretically viewed through the concept of public good, since in order for a public policy to be adopted with regard to an issue, this issue should be public in nature or at least should somehow concern the public sphere.

In order to clearly understand the concept of policy relating to television content and perceive content as a public good, the very notion of content should first be clarified. One problem that appears frequently when referring to the study of media content is how content is defined. The study of media content is determined based on the assessment of the degree of diversity and intensity; with the intensity being interpreted as the quantitative and qualitative classification of the content of genres. An accurate and comprehensive definition of the conceptual aspect of content remains extremely challenging since it is a multidimensional matter.

However, correlating content with the public sphere could be one means by which to provide an interpretational dimension. According to Birkland (2010), the study of public policy is important, since the researcher can use it to examine and offer a solution to public matters and problems. Birkland (2010) associates the concept of public policy with the public sphere and politics. Specifically, he argues that: “The study of public policy is generally considered an important aspect of political science, so it’s useful to start by asking, ‘What is politics?’”. One way to conceive of politics is as a process by which societies help figure out how to

organize and regulate themselves; that is, how to govern themselves. What makes this ‘political’ is its location in the public sphere, where decisions are made by the public to address issues that affect people in communities” (p.4). By following this rationale that Birkland develops with regard to politics and the public sphere, it is possible to discuss media content, since content also directly affects social structures. Moreover, the public sphere or the public arena is formed by the media and the role they have in a certain society. Therefore, the question that arises as to the extent to which media content is a public good and not a commercial product.

Over the last decades there has been a massive revision with regard to what is considered private and what public. In a broader sense, the market includes public and private goods, without clearly delineating their boundaries or defining the nature of each product (product labelling). The dominance of the liberal economy, with its “invisible hand”, as conceived by Adam Smith (Micklewaith and Wooldridge, 2000), on the one hand and the fear of moving towards a brutal form of capitalism and capitalization (Luttwak, 1999) on the other, represent the rationales of the market and state respectively, namely of the two basic social mechanisms for the coordination of economic activity worldwide, which must be complementary and balance each other.

In an attempt to define goods, public goods are considered those that are de facto consumed by the public, regardless of the number of consumers; that is, their availability does not decrease when the consumers increase (Herrero, 2004). On the contrary, private goods are traded across markets based on price mechanisms; they offer exclusive services and have an explicitly defined ownership status (Kaul and Mendoza, 2003). Therefore, private goods are those that appear in the market, while public are those that belong to the state. However, the boundaries between them are not clear, since they both operate in the private and public field, and they can turn from public into private and vice versa.<sup>11</sup> The big question, therefore, is whether television, and more specifically its content, should be considered a public good or as a part of commercial industry, that is a commercial product with purchasing power.

With regard to free-to-air television, which is a mass consumption good, the viewers are in a non-competitive environment for the use of the same product (non-rival consumption), in other words, the number of people watching a programme does not affect its availability, since it is transmitted through electromagnetic waves to every person who owns the

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<sup>11</sup>It has been observed that commercial industries are bound by their own regulations, norms and standards and they often engage in legal disputes with the state, while public enterprises gradually follow market directions and transfer their services to private suppliers.

necessary equipment.<sup>12</sup> This is not the case for cable television, which is available only to viewers who pay an additional fee and clearly constitutes a product of commercial industry.

Moreover, the fact that television products follow the economy of scale (Pickard, 1989), where the producers distribute their product to as large an audience as possible, reinforces the view that free-to-air television is a public good. Television programmes have a significantly high cost, but quite low, even zero, additional expenses, a characteristic that allows for them to be repeatedly rebroadcast<sup>13</sup> (Dunnett, 1990), which not only does not affect their production cost, but decreases the total cost per viewer as well. Clearly, this requires a high percentage of television business to be concentrated in the hands of those who make the rules (Collins, Garnham and Locksley, 1988). According to the authors, the micro-economy of cultural production tends to develop in oligopolistic structures, even with the use of new technologies. The absence of active competition and the lack of legal initiatives enable small groups to dominate the production, much like many other industries.

More specifically, the significantly large part that industrial societies, especially the US, play in the field of media production and proliferation, has caused many researchers to talk about media imperialism and the hindrance of the public nature of television. Schiller (1989), in particular, argues that what is happening nowadays is the creation and globalization of a new commercial info-cultural environment.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the owner of one of the greatest media empires worldwide, Rupert Murdoch, giving a speech in October, 1994, responded to those that think this situation constitutes a risk to democracy and opinion debates. He argued that because capitalists always try to defeat their competitors, free markets never result in monopoly. In fact, monopolies exist only when they are supported by governments (Giddens, 2002).

In the next subchapter the methodological organization of the content is discussed in detail, with regard to its classification, as well as to the division of television programming into sections of the day.

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<sup>12</sup>In other media categories, such as the press, buying a newspaper reduces the number of newspapers available for the rest of the consumers and obviously prevents another consumer from purchasing the same newspaper, a fact that excludes the press from public goods.

<sup>13</sup>Distribution strategies (windowing), where profit maximization for a product is attempted by distributing it to different windows (television, cinema, videotapes, pay television, etc.) and they are used extensively and prove that the value of a television product is not determined by its first broadcast; on the contrary, old movies and TV series constitute a valuable material.

<sup>14</sup>Schiller argues that US television and radio networks are influenced by the federal government, in particular by the Ministry of Defence, and mentions RCA as an example, which also owns the NBC TV and radio network, and is considered as one of the main defence subcontractors of the Pentagon.

#### **2.4. The issue of genre in the context of studying diversity**

One of the issues to which attention should be drawn for the study of diversity is the discussion regarding genres and their selection by content programmers. Programming categorization is one of the most controversial methodological issues in television studies, due to the fact that even today there still is no commonly accepted methodological formula for categorization and classification. According to Braidt (2002), who deals with the study of film categorization, this problem is mainly caused by the difficulties in incorporating any model or categorization formula within a specific historical context. As a consequence, the diachronic study of the historical development of a certain genre is impossible and therefore so is attempts to standardize it.

Genre study and diversity study are not two separate matters; on the contrary, they are closely linked. The study of diversity focuses on the way genres are expressed. In other words, it deals with the way they are formed and the frequency with which they are broadcast. An interesting correlation appears here which should not be overlooked since it is quite useful in illustrating the way in which the degree of diversity is calculated: The degree of content diversity is directly associated with viewing ratings and consequently with the choice of the genres that constitute a television programming schedule. The ratings essentially affect the programming form, as such, the issue of genres is discussed in this subchapter. Heretakis (2006) analyses this relation through a process which he models and which is focused on the link between ratings and the commercialization of the content. This relation – as it is analysed by Heretakis (2006) – basically demonstrates the programming cycle from the production to its distribution and consumption and the catalytic role that the number of viewers, namely ratings, play in this cycle, since they are translated into advertising profits for the media. Through this relation, content is viewed as a commercial product, the planning and structure of which depend greatly on viewing ratings. Therefore, this study argues – and this will become clearer through the following application chapters – is that the choice of genres that constitute the content and consequently the resulting degree of diversity are indispensable components of this relation.

A methodological approach which deals with the conceptual interpretation of genres was conceived by Bordwell (1991), who, when analysing the various types and the rhetoric of cinema, uses the term “theme” to refer to the individual features of cinema and its subcategories. According to this approach, a theme, which is a distinct feature of style, form

or technique, can appear in more than one genre. In this way, by classifying themes into subcategories, namely sub-genres and super-genres, and the respective correlations – that is differences and similarities – a thematic group is created, where genres (either sub or super – genre) are in conflict with each other. The case of cinema is an important point of reference, since it is the medium that preceded television and so it is logical that researchers concerned themselves with classification issues before the advent of television.

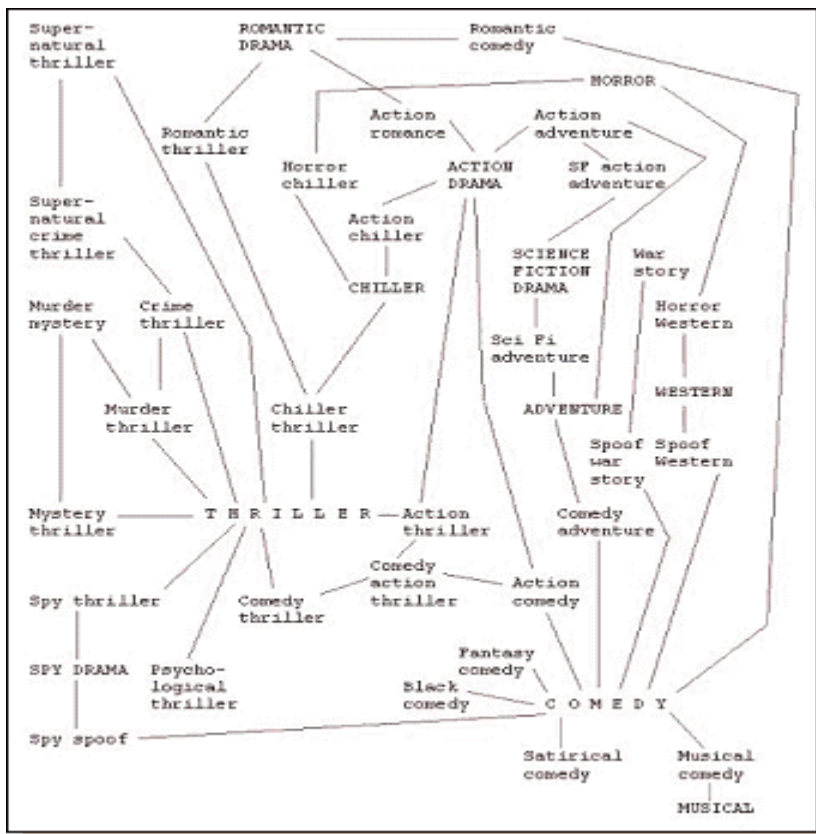


Diagram 2. 1: In this diagram the classification of film genres is presented, as it was conceived and developed by Chandler, based on the categorization of the magazine “What’s on TV”, developed for British television in 1993 (Chandler, 1997).

According to William Adams (pers. comm., 2007, 2009), three basic conditions have to be included in the planning of different programming content typologies and, therefore, in “typing theories” as William Adams calls them: a) typologies must be empirically structured and based on practice and thorough analysis b) typologies must reflect the preferences and views of the audience and c) typologies must cover more than two programming zones and have a broader methodological means of covering as much air time and space as possible, instead of just covering the prime-time zone, as in most studies which examine aspects of content (pers. comm., 2007, 2009).



These methodological criteria are similar to the classification of the Q-sort methodology, a technique that classifies items using a rationale based on relativity, as well on certain other criteria. This technique was first used in psychology and, later on, widely used in social sciences.

A typical classification regarding types of programming is, for instance, information-education-entertainment, the three-fold model developed by John Reith for the BBC, a classification model based on the philosophy of a public television monopoly, which was adopted in other cases as well, such as in the case of Greek public television. As will be discussed in the following practical chapters, the approach used in this thesis, as far as the issue of classification is concerned, is based on the two main methodological axes – television audience figures and diversity – which are methodological estimations and the ensuing research queries arising from the typology that could lead to further examination. Typology, however, is the methodological background for the study of television audience ratings and diversity in television.

In this research, four factors are detected, which contribute to the classification pattern and methodological analysis of television genres. First is the taxonomy based on television viewing behaviour and the preferences of viewers.<sup>15</sup> Second, we examine the taxonomy that serves the needs of television channels, considering what they seek to clarify through genre analysis, such as levels of diversity or television viewing figures and wider competition issues. Third is the taxonomy based on specific characteristics of the medium such as the above parallelism with regard to the study of online newspapers, which is based on particular specificities of the medium. If, for instance, the taxonomy refers to pay television, then the genres will go in a specific direction and are clearly different from those of free-to-air television channels. Fourth is the mimitism taxonomy. The fact is that in most television markets, one or two classification formulas are set up and promoted by specific companies, in agreement with the television channels. As will also be shown in the following chapters, content homogeneity is a part of content classification, which occurs through a process of

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<sup>15</sup> The empirical study by Sug-Min Youn is based on the preferences and choices of viewers. Specifically, Sug-Min Youn uses four research hypotheses which help her find out the extent to which classification is affected by the preferences of viewers. These research hypotheses are as follows: 1. Programme choice options will have a positive effect on preference gratification, 2. Programming awareness will have a positive effect on preference gratification, 3. Viewing group compromises will have a negative effect on preference gratification, 4. Strength of preference will have a positive effect on preference gratification. At this point, it should be noted that, significantly, the common feature of these studies is the fact that the interviewees are invited to think about pre-established programme types provided by television audience measurement companies. This fact significantly narrows the range of conclusions that can be drawn, even though most of the time a wide spectrum of genres is used for the studies. The writer uses the same method that is referred to in this thesis and provides the interviewees with specific programme types and categories, and then they are invited to fill in Likert-type scales (S. M. Yun, "Programme Type Preference and Programme Choice", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Broadcast Education Association, Las Vegas, 1993).

mimicking or copying between television channels. In this research study, this phenomenon is also called ‘guided classification’ or ‘A priori agreed classification’.

<b>Section of the day</b>	<b>Time zone</b>
Morning	07.00 – 11.59
Noon	12.00 – 14.59
Afternoon	15.00 – 17.59
Early fringe	18.00 – 19.59
Prime time zone or central news zone	20.00 – 20.59
Night	21.00 – 23.59
After midnight	24.00 – 02.00
Graveyard slot (it is not measured)	02.00 – 06.59

Table 2. 1: The time zones of programming scheduling (sections of the day), as divided by AGB. The selection of the time, at which the programme zones are placed, is directly associated with and depends on the viewers’ everyday habits, channels’ requests and viewer ratings.

According to a manager in the ratings department of AGB Hellas (Makrides, pers. comm., 2009), in order to discuss programme typology, the notion of typology should first be defined. The interpretation provided by the company is based on two criteria - pylons: firstly, programming categorization depends on the social characteristics of the viewers, namely their everyday routine and how this affects their exposure to television (e.g., watching time, preferences, etc.), and secondly, what is more convenient for the channels, which ultimately are the clients - subscribers to AGB. The first criterion, namely the audience’s habits, classifies the programming into zones. This is done for methodological reasons relating to further analysis conducted by the company.

AGB's approach is based on several studies that have been conducted on the matter in question. For instance, Frank, Becknell and Clokey (1971) base the methodology of their study regarding the categorization of programming types on the preferences and habits of the viewers. More specifically, in order to categorize the programming types according to audience habits, they employ variables, such as the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the audience, the ways viewers use the television set and their preferences in programming types during the day and the night. A similar methodological approach is employed by Rust and Alpert (1984), who, by using a model that they constructed, theoretically explain the issue of individual television viewing and how the viewer's choose what programme they will watch. The interesting point is the great number of programming types used by AGB for programming categorization and the stages of subcategorizing the genres (sub-genres). AGB's genre categorization method consists of three classification levels (1<sup>st</sup> level – 2<sup>nd</sup> level – 3<sup>rd</sup> level) and comprises almost 500 programming genres and subgenres. The great number of categories is due to the fact that the company wishes to include every possible programming type – even the most rare and unusual – in order to be able to respond to any request whatsoever that a channel may make.

In the methodology chapter (fourth chapter), some individual issues concerning genres are discussed; specifically, their positioning in the schedule and why the specific genres were selected for this empirical study.

## **2.5. The concept of viewpoint diversity**

One of the main components of television content diversity, which is studied in this thesis, is viewpoint diversity or opinion diversity or, as it can also be referred to, diversity of voices. Viewpoint diversity is addressed empirically by the FCC in the third chapter and applied empirically to Greek television in the sixth chapter. In this subchapter, it is dealt with conceptually on a theoretical level, even though there is not sufficient literature with regard to the viewpoint diversity of television content or the media in general. It is therefore studied based on empirical approaches and an analysis of specific cases.

It is not possible to conceptually approach viewpoint diversity only by referring to a simplistic definition, for instance, that viewpoint diversity is the diversity that indicates the degree of opinions and outflow of ideas within the content, because viewpoint diversity is a far more complex concept. Baker (2008), for example, associates viewpoint diversity with

media ownership status, based on three arguments that oppose media concentration and support viewpoint diversity. According to Baker, these points are: Firstly, the democratic distribution, secondly, the democratic safeguard value and thirdly, the media quality value. Baker specifically argues: “The first two reasons, I suspect, represented the primary—but usually unarticulated—concerns of the public when nearly two million people wrote to oppose the FCC’s recent relaxation of concentration restraints,<sup>16</sup> while the third often finds expression, with various levels of articulation, among editors, journalists, artists and others in the media professions. I describe the logic of each in turn” (Baker, 2008, p.653).

Baker (2008) refers to the idea of “equal voice”, which is linked to viewpoint diversity and identifies three factors that make it difficult to conceptually define “equal voice” and, primarily, to practically apply such an idea. The first reason is that anyone who wishes to express themselves and addresses a big audience cannot do this effectively or at least equally, vis-à-vis other people. Baker argues that: “...the democratic distribution value of maximum dispersal must not overwhelm the competing value of allowing effective speakers to amass large audiences” (Baker, 2008, p.654). He also emphasizes that: “...media would not be “mass” without specialization in “voice” (Baker, 2008, p.654). This point is important because the rationale of mass media is based on the idea of reaching big audiences, without implying that, at the same time, mass media express a variety of voices and opinions or supports the idea of equal voice. Baker’s second point, namely the potential for the hindrance of the idea of “equal voice”, comes from the fact that mergers of media corporations and their business concentration favour specific groups which interact with these corporations and excludes other groups that do not communicate with them. Finally, Baker claims that the distribution of voice within the public sphere should be expanded, an action that would help, he argues, certain media to express a larger proportion of society and this could be institutionally established. The report by The German Commission on Concentration in the Media argues along the same lines, associating viewpoint diversity with media ownership status. Referring to the case of Germany, it mentions: “The regulation of media concentration, provided in the German Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting, is part of the rules forming the ‘positive broadcasting order’ required by German Constitutional law. This control ensures that the diversity of existing opinion can be articulated as broadly and thoroughly as possible and that comprehensive information is available to the public” (German Commission, 2010, p.2).

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<sup>16</sup>Baker (2008) refers to the case of *Prometheus Radio Project v. FCC*, 373 F.3d 372, 386 (3d Cir. 2004).

In the third chapter of this research, where Napoli's (1999) empirical approach to diversity is analysed, viewpoint diversity is employed as one of the components that form his approach. Beyond that, placing Napoli's approach within the broader context of the marketplace of ideas turns the discussion towards the issue of the public nature of public goods. In other words, if media content belongs to the marketplace of ideas, then it should fairly and equally represent all voices.

A typical example that illustrates the difficulty in accessing the media is that of minorities and ethnic groups, which are not provided with an equal time distribution, meaning, therefore, that they cannot address a massive audience (Monteiro, 2006). In any case, the main role and purpose of the mass media is to express social structures and processes. Holmberg (1997) claims the following: "To a degree the quality of democracy is at stake – there is a dynamic interplay, a dialogue, between elite and mass opinions in a democracy, but whether the dialogue is run from above or from below is less decisive. In a society with freedom of expression, elite-driven as well as mass-driven opinion changes are legitimate democratic process" (p.269).

Based on the above discussion, viewpoint diversity is placed within a broad context, since it can be analysed and approached from multiple perspectives. Baker (2008), through his analysis, draws significant conclusions, such as that there is a need for the equal distribution of representation in the media or the promotion of specific groups through the choices made by media businesses. In methodological terms, the equal time distribution, for example, refers to the time provided to each speaker or group, in order for them to express their views and opinion in proportion to other persons or groups that may have less or no time to express their ideas within a certain medium.

The most important conclusion that is drawn from the above discussion is that viewpoint diversity is not merely a separate idea or concept, but it is linked to the democratic processes of a society and it operates within its institutional framework.

The methodology chapter presents the way in which viewpoint diversity is empirically approached in this research, as well as the components of the approach, such as the time factor, the representation of groups or people and the topics covered by the news.

### **2.5.1. People diversity**

One of the issues relevant to this research, which falls under viewpoint diversity, is people diversity. More specifically, in the following analysis of viewpoint diversity in practice, one of the parameters under examination is the degree of the representation of different people or groups in newscasts, which represents the degree of people diversity within the broader context of viewpoint diversity.

With regard to people diversity, there are not sufficient references in the literature or from any other sources – possibly because it is usually analysed in the context of viewpoint diversity. Nonetheless, there are two main interpretations of this concept. Napoli (1999), for example, when referring to people diversity, actually means workforce diversity. In other words, he refers to the diversity of media employees and how the composition of the human resources in the field of media affects content. In the third chapter, Napoli's approach is presented in detail. On the contrary, Iosifidis (2010) takes a different perspective. He specifically refers to “person and group diversity” within programming. Iosifidis argues with regard to this matter: “Programmes have to cater for the interests of all parts of the community. The main point here is access, but also representation” (2010, p.15). Therefore, according to Iosifidis, the concept of people diversity is associated with the representation of ideas and opinions through the media.

In this research study, people diversity is defined as the degree of the representation of different people or groups, of any nature, such as political parties, or social or cultural groups, in the media. In the empirical study presented in the sixth chapter on viewpoint diversity in Greek television, a comparison of people diversity among the channels in question is carried out. In this way, the tendencies or the preferences of the channels with regard to certain people or groups are illustrated.

### **2.6. The significance of the study of source diversity within the general context of studying diversity**

Television programming is a field of research that attracts the interest of researchers, mostly as part of the study of diversity and pluralism. The extensive study of this sector has been carried out due to the interest the EU has shown in television productions since the early years of private television, as well as the impact of television programmes on culture and customs (Papandrea, 1998). This subchapter will deal with the wider context of the field of television

productions, by outlining and analysing the European television production industry, as well as the Greek television production industry.

However, before the analysis of the field of television production which will follow, we should attempt to develop an approach to the concept of flexible specialization (Post-Fordism or Flexibilism) in the television production industry. Through this analysis, the process of the production of content within the media market can be more easily understood and, furthermore, the way the diversity of content is formed through the structure and the order of the market can be clarified. As a concept though, flexible specialization addresses a broad spectrum of the market and not only media or content production. Essentially, this theory supports the decentralization of production and its distribution at multiple levels, by employing specialized departments and specialized human resources. Collins (2001), with regard to the philosophy of this theory and its significance with respect to the market, poses the following questions: “Sociologists have long struggled with the question of how work is changing. Is it becoming more humanized and fulfilling? Or is it becoming more mindless and routine, fragmented in such a way as to draw on only the most rudimentary abilities?” (2001, p.16).

Tempest, Starkey and Barnatt (1997) study the concept of flexible specialization based on the case of the British market and account for the importance of this analysis, as follows: “Such analysis contributes to our understanding of the diversity of flexible production in an increasingly important industrial sector – the television industry – whose outputs are now widely conceptualized as part of the basic software of the multimedia revolution” (1997, p.39). The authors (1997) also claim that: “Flexible specialization can be thought of at two levels; the way in which production itself is organized at the point of production, and the institutional framework which supports the organization of production and markets, so influencing the competitive environment” (p. 40).

In the first subchapter of this chapter the significance of the part institutional diversity plays within the broader study of content diversity was discussed. Through this discussion and the rationale of flexible specialization, the way that the industry of content production functions and is organized can be perceived. In addition, it facilitates access to the actual production process and the various sections that constitute it. This is highly important, as well as useful for the analysis that will follow, since it illustrates – which will also be shown below – that

the degree of content diversity is directly associated with the way the market of television products is structured.

Very little research has been conducted focusing on Greek productions, which is the empirical case that the following chapters will deal with. In contrast, at the international level, a significant number of studies refer to the production of programmes, either by analysing the case in a particular country (case study), or by analysing fundamental policies adopted internationally, using cases observed in several countries. A description of these studies for the framework of this particular study is essential, because that is how the role of television production in the promotion of ideas, perceptions and customs within society will become clearer. Moreover, in this way, the level of diversity in the televisual field can be determined.

To be clear, and before referring to the related studies, it is worth pointing out that the study of production companies is, in essence, a study of source diversity, or, to be more precise, a very significant part of the sources, which is why it is essential to understand how production companies act and to understand the framework for their actions. Source diversity, however, is not confined to television or production companies. Instead, it is a field that, even 20 years after deregulation, keeps on developing new parameters such as the internet or mobile telephony (Carpenter, 2008; Braman, 2007).

Medina (2004), who approaches the field of television production by discussing the sufficiency of European and international laws, while also using examples taken from particular countries, states that, in order to achieve diversity and pluralism in television, further factors should be taken into consideration such as the influence exercised by vertical concentration and television audience measurement ratings. In her study on television production in Europe, focusing on the historical framework of laws developed in the EU (Medina, 2004)<sup>17</sup> and the way of thinking that developed because of those laws, she places considerable emphasis on their content (Medina, 2004). According to Medina, the main goal of these laws was to boost the national television production of each country. In this way, the national culture of each country would be protected against a full-scale invasion of American programmes, a treaty that took place during the early years of the denationalization of

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<sup>17</sup> As far as the European Directives are concerned, the Amsterdam Protocol, which concerns the system of public broadcasting in the Member States (1997), as well as the “Television Without Frontiers” Directive (TVWF Directive), which is the cornerstone of the European Union’s audiovisual policy are quite interesting. In addition, each country has adopted provisions regulating this field, such as the British Communication White Paper in Great Britain, the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act of 1993 in Ireland, the Administrative Law 1265/2001 in Portugal, Law 25/1994 (as amended by Law 22/1999) in Spain, the Radio and Television Act of 1996 in Sweden, Law 27516/2003 in Belgium, Law 1052/2002 in Denmark, Law 119/1999 in Italy, the Dutch Media Act Section 54.2 in the Netherlands, Law 3166/2003 in Greece.



television in European countries. This particular practice can potentially lead to an increase in the diversity and pluralism of television programming. Medina, having studied the cases of several EU member countries, drew some very important conclusions.

One of the basic arguments mentioned by Medina is that the development of local production does not lead to a high degree of diversity and pluralism. This happens for two basic reasons: the first involves vertical concentration in the field of the media, a field where the larger television networks own production companies, ensuring a major role in the selection, content and opinions promoted by the programming produced. The second reason has to do with the fact that large production companies, which cooperate with many television networks and, especially when dealing with prime time zones, achieve high television audience ratings and in this way actually create a specific form of concentration in the field. Although the European Union accepted the above-mentioned opinions relating to production companies, there are still a number of issues to be resolved for the problem to be dealt with sufficiently. Such issues are, for instance, determining under which circumstances it is possible to consider that a production company has a direct relation of ownership with a particular television network or how the magnitude of its influence upon the audience can be measured with certainty.

According to Medina and the policies promoted by the EU, the role of independent producers in the functioning of the field is of major importance. Their role, under certain conditions, according to the conclusions drawn by Medina, can be catalytic in helping avoid the concentration of ownership as well as in promoting programming that would be selected more freely than those selected by the production companies owned by television networks.

For her part, Doyle (2002) studies the issues related to the production of television programming by examining the broader field of media enterprise development. Based on the communications sector in the UK,<sup>18</sup> Doyle refers to the main ways media enterprises grow and, more particularly, to horizontal, vertical and diagonal growth. The two latter cases of media enterprise growth are related to a greater (vertical growth) or lesser extent (diagonal growth) with the production of television programming

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<sup>18</sup>The expression “communication” sector instead of “television” or “radio and television” sector is used intentionally, as Doyle includes in her study the entirety of the mass media, including the concept of diagonal concentration with reference to cases where media such as newspapers can own production companies.

Doyle proposes that the ratio of vertical content in the media is responsible for the ownership relationship between the distributors (television networks) and producers of television programming (production companies). As Doyle points out, having a wide variety of programmes to choose from, from a significant number of production companies, is an essential element that can boost pluralism and diversity. This issue was the main subject of laws related to this topic in the UK that finally had an adverse impact.<sup>19</sup> Doyle believes that the vertical concentration between television networks and production companies came about largely due to the guarantee that the programming would be profitable if companies were to adopt a vertical shareholder structure. So, by having an ownership relation with a television network, production companies distribute their programmes to their audience, minimize the risk related to economic conditions (as there is no actual danger of the programming not being distributed) and at the same time enjoy the possibility of wider distribution to foreign networks and therefore an increase in profit.

For their part, in some cases, independent producers can play an important role within the market in the UK. However, the danger they have to deal with is significantly larger. Diagonal concentration, which is related to independent producers, stipulates that there can be an ownership relation with other forms of media besides television for a production company, a usual practice in the UK market. According to Doyle's conclusions, the situation is a result of the laws and developments at the level of ownership, either at the level of distribution (channels) or at the level of production outlets, leading to there being a limited number of companies that have a significant impact on the field of television, the consequence of which being relatively limited diversity and pluralism within UK television (Doyle, 2002).

Tunstall (1993), in a study on television production in Great Britain, focused mostly upon the historical framework surrounding the development of the field and the changes that took place up to the early 1990s. In a text belonging to the earliest works focusing exclusively on television programming productions, he opted to study how the field was shaped through a large number of interviews with producers who were or had been active in the field. The writer did not focus greatly on legal framework issues or those related to the development of the media industry. On the contrary, he focused (1993) on the way the field was developed, the genres of the programming to be broadcast and the role they played in television, as well

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<sup>19</sup> Specifically referring to the Communications Act of 2003, which reviews the UK's previous regulatory framework regarding the shareholder structure of media companies.

as the staff in this particular field. Moreover, it is worth examining the classification of the networks into public and private with regard to programming production and broadcasting.

According to Tunstall (1993) the largest proportion of producers had previous experience with the two largest television networks in the country –the BBC, the public service broadcaster, and ITV, the private broadcaster, since these two broadcasters were the first to be established, in 1922 and 1954, respectively, when the deregulation of television in the UK took place. Programmes were produced within the networks (vertical production, not concentration between the production and the broadcasting of programming). This practice was largely modified in 1982, when the newly founded network Channel 4 started cooperating with other independent networks in order to produce its programmes. This practice, combined with laws adopted by the Thatcher government, resulted in a change in the structure of the field. Percentages for programme broadcasting Quotas were imposed on ITV and BBC whereby a percentage of their broadcasting would have to consist of programmes created by independent producers (set at 25%, although both networks surpassed this percentage by further developing their cooperation with independent producers). These two steps radically changed the television landscape. To give an example, while in 1980 independent production companies were mostly active in the production of advertisements and cinema movies, in 1990 there were about 1,000 television programming production companies. Channel 4, in 1991, was cooperating with 668 different television programming production companies (Tunstall, 1993).

This change also brought many other important changes. Firstly, the two large networks that used to produce their own programmes (in-house production) were obliged to suspend the operation of certain studios and dismiss a proportion of their personnel. At the same time, the production field, in its broader sense, had to lose some of the important advantages it had had up to that point, such as increased potential as far as personnel, premises and technical support were concerned, and strict cost control and independence from production indexes, and audience preferences. On the other hand, there were some important advantages such as the possibility for production companies to specialize in particular programming genres, as well as for the possibility for an improvement in the diversity and pluralism of the programmes.

Tunstall (1993), having assessed the changes that occurred, refers to the ways the programming schedules were produced and the requirements of each programming genre, a quite significant parameter for any assessment of the broadcasting genre. This parameter is

very interesting in the light of the analysis that will be presented in the following chapters. The most difficult programmes to produce are documentaries and research programmes, because they require long-term and detailed research and difficult – frequently exterior – filming. The production of drama and comedy is also quite difficult because of the economic demands of actors, technicians, and the planning and design of the programmes. Sports programming productions, especially football shows, are quite profitable, even though they may be covered live and so need a lot of personnel; in practice, these programmes may cover many hours of television programming.

Finally, Tunstall (1993) approaches the issue of promoting and presenting programmes as well as how the existing framework for production companies is formed. According to Tunstall (1993), the support offered to a programming schedule by other media formats such as radio and print is very important, so that the programmes selected have a strong impact upon the audience.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the role of producers who cooperate with television networks and largely act as gatekeepers is very important, as they have the important task of finding shows that will find a place in the programming schedule of a channel (Tunstall, 1993).<sup>21</sup>

These two analyses, presented by Doyle and Tunstall, describe the development of British television production, though from different perspectives. These issues can be explored in more detail by studying relatively recent reports produced by the commission OFCOM (2005), which deals with the control of communication media. One particular report presents a time framework of the intervention and adjustment of television production, and then analyses the reasons for the measures taken by the state. It focuses mainly on the work and important changes that can be made as a result of attempts to bolster independent producers.<sup>22</sup>

According to the report, intervention in the field of television was mainly positive with respect to most of its initial aims. The volume of the production of independent producers

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<sup>20</sup>A programming policy used by the groups that own other media besides a television network, such as, for instance, a newspaper or a radio channel. In this way, they can promote their programming through other networks and at no extra cost.

<sup>21</sup>According to Tunstall, producers can be classified into two main categories: a) producers that still work in some of the networks and play an important role in the selection and production of the programmes that will be broadcast by the networks and b) independent producers that produce programmes, whose sole aim is to sell these programmes. In practical terms, the relationship between those two categories is that the producers belonging to the second category – namely, the independent producers – seek to become customers of the producers of the first category.

<sup>22</sup>According to the report, changes to which independent producers could contribute are: a) the promotion of novelty and creativity, and the adoption of more extreme ideas, b) an increase in the competition and quality and a simultaneous decrease in prices, c) an improvement of the diversity and the size in terms of the genres and location of programmes, d) the creation of a new team of specialized personnel and a work force that would be active in this field, e) helping new television channels seeking to enter the field, f) the creation of new jobs which would for the most part be taken by British workers, g) the creation of a base upon which international success could be built. It should, however, be emphasized that there is some doubt regarding the likelihood of whether independent producers would be able to contribute substantially with regard to many of the elements mentioned above.

increased greatly, in fact more than expected because of recent changes<sup>23</sup> in the field, such as the creation of satellite and digital networks. At the same time, many networks, such as the BBC, went a step further than their conventional obligation required by broadening their cooperation with independent producers even more. According to OFCOM, these practices resulted in the development of the field and an improvement in the services provided, thus according these developments an important role in the field.

However, this important report also highlights some less positive aspects. First, the initial goal of decentralizing this sector, helping it move away from the London area, does not seem to have been achieved, as only four of the 30 largest companies that are active in this field are based in other cities. At the same time, ten of the largest companies in the field (out of a total of about 600 companies) make up 50% of the market in terms of programmes broadcast and in terms of broadcasting. The majority of these companies appear to be involved in the production of most of the genres of programming provided to the networks with which they cooperate. Smaller companies tend to specialize in particular genres. However, the field is generally deemed to have developed positively, particularly if we consider the expense involved in producing domestic/local programmes.

Koukoutsaki (2003), in the only analysis that studies the production of television programmes in Greece, focuses upon programmes with fictional content on Greek television, and studies the development of the field from the 1970s to the late 1990s, giving a brief description of the state of Greek television. By studying the quantitative elements of the production of entertainment programmes from the 1970s to 1997, she draws some important conclusions on how the field developed.

According to Koukoutsaki, the deregulation of television during the late 1980s had no significant impact on the production sector. Public channels used to broadcast their own productions, whilst private channels directly or indirectly controlled, via satellite companies, the majority of all domestic drama production. This is an important issue that should be observed, as the sector used to depend on the habits and interests of the owners of television channels. Furthermore, according to a study conducted by Koukoutsaki focusing on television production in Greece, there are no common definitions for the genres of the programmes

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<sup>23</sup>The specific report points out – with regard to technological changes related to television – that an increase in digital channels would lead to an increase in independent productions since this would lead to an increase in the distribution platforms, which constitute a new tool in the hands of programme makers. These changes have led to the modification of the structural forms of the sector since the role of independent productions within the business structure has been reset.Ibid.

broadcast on television. There are a few exceptions: Some people active in the field of television studies have tried to classify programmes but these are nonetheless estimated as being insufficient; they also bring external factors to their classifications, such as the frequency of broadcasting or the means of production (“external” productions).

Presenting the results of her research on entertainment programmes in Greece during the three most recent decades, Koukoutsaki concludes that there are four fundamental types of programme: a) dramatic serials b) soap operas c) comedies, and d) adventure and crime drama. Each one of these categories has its own specific features based on duration, broadcasting hour(s), origin before entering the Greek radio and television system, and the number of episodes.

As part of her study of these programmes, Koukoutsaki (2003) divides the history of television production in Greece into five different periods. The first ends during the mid-1970s, when production companies were barely active in the field of programming production and mostly active in other procedures such as the import of foreign programmes and the production of television game shows, advertising spots, movies and plays. According to Koukoutsaki, the majority of these companies produced only one television serial each year. According to information provided by Koukoutsaki, these companies used to be owned by directors, actors, scriptwriters, advertisers or businessmen, who had acquired some experience from Greek cinema in the 1960s or had studied abroad. During the second period, up to 1981, there was significant growth, as the production of programmes increased to a great extent and at the same time technical equipment improved, something that facilitated exterior filming, improved acoustics and generally improved quality in terms of technical support.

From 1982 to 1989, programming production underwent a reduction due to two main parameters. The first involved negative changes in television production globally, and the second the negative way in which the government of that time dealt with television by considering it as a propaganda tool with a pedagogic character. From 1989, after denationalization, to 1994, television production in Greece experienced previously unseen development in both the production of programmes and the genres produced. This upward course changed in 1994 due to several reasons, mainly financial, which made production companies look for more economical solutions such as the production of reality and talk shows.

Consequently, according to the fore-mentioned approaches, the number of producers who provided programmes to television networks increased, initially fulfilling the particular criterion. 'Initially' is used here, because it is considered that, in practice, many independent producers could not find a way to sell their programmes to television networks (about half of the 400 production companies). Furthermore, television networks would select their programmes in strict cooperation with their own production companies. Consequently, this situation created vertical concentration. However, according to the two writers, nobody could say that there was no significant improvement with regard to this particular parameter.

As far as the diversity of programmes is concerned, according to this study, very few changes occurred in relation to the genre of the programmes, which remained the same as the programmes from the previous period. In other words, according to the writers, that particular and very significant goal was not fulfilled; this failure was due largely to the structure of the market as well as the habits of consumers. Finally, the changes did not even have the desired result, namely the sharing of the cost of producing programmes. Although the percentage of expenses involved in buying programmes from independent producers increased, it was still low compared to the percentage spent by the channel on their total programming production.

Television production has been a source of great interest for the international academic community and, as such, it can be examined thoroughly. Consequently, collective volumes should undoubtedly be written on this issue as far as television is concerned. In one collective volume, Cottle (2003) addresses the organizing practices of the media as well as the way programmes are produced. Although the studies discussed in the book examine a wide range of issues, some are of relevance for this study.

First, Cottle's (2003) foreword presents an interesting overview of the field. In the first paragraph of the article Cottle claims that the media, and especially the programming production sector, operate according to the theoretical models suggested by the Frankfurt School of Political Economy and Cultural Industry. The adoption of those practices resulted in the domination of commercial and predominating models in programming production. Moreover, this opinion is directly related to the logic of vertical and horizontal concentration promoted in the field.

Although it is generally stated that the field should be examined much further, this is not the case for the production of newscasts, news-related and other informative programmes, where

first the research needs to be more detailed. After reviewing these particular studies, a more detailed overview of the current state of news-related and other informative programmes is presented. According to that text, this current state exists only with the fulfilment of a number of particular requirements. The main conclusion, thus, is that particular types of newscasts and news-related programmes reproduce predominating ideas. Furthermore, the majority of journalists merely reproduce already existing and dominant ideologies.

According to Cottle's conclusion, two main parameters should be examined, which could significantly improve television productions. The first is to detect and study new types of news-related programmes, which must not relate to the predominant ideology of the cultural setting within which the news is presented nor the logics of commercialization and "popular consumption". Second, current and upcoming changes in the field of communication should be studied in depth in the light of the advent of new digitally convergent technologies, which are of particular relevance to satellite television.

Baltruschat (2003), in a study on the Canadian television sector, analyses the practices of production companies globally. These companies use international co-productions as a means of attracting investors and to boost their competitiveness nationally and internationally. According to Baltruschat, this specific tendency could be interpreted as occurring as a result of recent economic developments, as well as the changes that took place after the deregulation of television. As previously shown, the basic logic of the role of television changed. Instead of promoting culture as a public good, television broadcasting turned into a means of promoting the culture of the product. This change led to a market that, instead of being local/national, went global, following international models.

According to Baltruschat's research, co-productions on Canadian television hugely increased, especially during the period, 1990-2000, in order to adapt to the international environment. This change, of course, contributed to a modification of the content produced, as the programmes broadcast presented cultural similarities and, at the same time, lacked political content to a great extent. Also, programmes focusing on human relations, as well as emotional stories (drama, adventure, science fiction, documentaries) tend to be more popular and are likely to attract more attention than other similar genres. In addition, there was an obvious reduction in the number of programmes addressing local issues, as they were replaced by programmes dealing with issues of international interest.



The conclusion is that this tendency detracts from the positive role television plays within society. This tendency limits the cultural character of programmes and, at the same time, a large concentration of this type is formed. The suggested solution is to shift from the culture of producing a product to the pre-existing culture of producing a public good. This practice could contribute to the improvement of diversity and pluralism. Furthermore, with regard to the question of “how could this be achieved?” the solution appears to come in the form of independent producers, who must be supported by an appropriate legal framework, as well as by cultural institutions. These practices, in combination with a powerful public television can create a structure that could boost the whole attempt, which is seen as completely necessary. Otherwise, public participation and citizens’ ability to access information in an effectively functioning society will be seriously harmed.

One article written by Besio, Hungerbühler, Morici and Prario (2008) is quite interesting, as it discusses the consequences of the imposition of quotas on television networks, as provided by the “Television without Frontiers Directive” issued in 1989. The writers, having studied cases in five European countries (Germany, Austria, Italy, France and Belgium), and having conducted several interviews with experts in the field, decided to study the changes that took place in terms of both production and the ways in which media organizations operate. The researchers focused on two main points, namely the distinction between large and small television organizations and the distinction between large and small countries, which are also related to the respective size of their markets.

This research focused on the impact of specific arrangements on the programming production market. According to the results of the study, the effects in the five countries examined differ and are strongly related to the measures adopted in each country as a result of the application of the directive. For example, in Belgium, Germany and Italy the arrangements applied as a result of the directive also contained arrangements for minority programmes that would be produced by independent producers.

The aim of increasing the number of programmes provided by independent producers was achieved to a great extent and quotas imposed, varying according to the particularities of each country, were successfully implemented. However, those arrangements are considered an intervention that also influences the way the media operates and there are negative consequences associated with such actions. Decisions concerning the programming that will be broadcast are made based upon three different parameters: the profile that should be

shown, the possibility of producing programmes and, finally, the planning undertaken, which also includes the quotas adopted. These principles largely influence how each channel operates, while at the same time the specific features of each market are not taken into consideration.

First of all, small as well as new networks had to deal with more serious problems, as, in order to produce programmes, they have to spend large amounts of money, which are very often hard to find. On the contrary, large networks, in order to cope with the new requirements, on the one hand, increased in-house productions and, on the other hand, entered into broader cooperation agreements with independent programming production companies. As far as the last variable is concerned, it seems its effect was ambiguous, as in most cases television networks prefer to cooperate with subsidiary production companies that belong to the same group of companies or media conglomerates. At the same time, according to people who are active in the media business, and work in small countries and small markets, it is difficult to fulfil their obligations because no production companies are active in specific production genres.

Similarly defective is the specific directive dealing with those media outlets which have specific contracts with non-European companies (the Italian MTV or the French Disney Channel). Networks that are required, due to socio-cultural reasons, to buy programming productions from non-European companies (like networks in Portugal or Spain that import a large part of their programmes from Latin America) experience similar problems. Even thematic channels, such as Germany's "Phoenix", the programming of which consists of documentaries, news broadcasts, special events coverage and discussion programmes, has to deal with a similar situation. Finally, it is important to emphasize the difficulty that networks have in keeping their systems up-to-date with the measures imposed, as well as coping with the administrative and financial consequences of operating in the field of television.

For his part, De Nooij (2008) studies the Dutch case. After the mid-1990s the strictest measures regarding programmes that were produced by independent producers were imposed in the Netherlands. The "Television without Frontiers" Directive provided that production by independent producers should make up at least 10% of broadcast programming. This practice was applied in most countries, although there were some small differences and even fewer exceptions. The respective percentage in the Dutch case, which reached 25% of the programmes broadcast, was the highest in the EU and was comparable to that of the UK,

which, according to the BBC Television Statement of Operation (2007), was at least 25%. This study, however, examines only public television channels, since private television networks were not bound by the adopted laws.

De Nooij, after analysing all the television programmes during the period, 1996-2000, concluded that the policy being followed did not deliver the required results. If we look at the basic position and reasoning of the government that was ruling before that particular quota was imposed, we see that their basic goal was to improve programming quality and the overall market. Quality is based on two main factors: technical quality and compliance with the requirements of network managers. Although the first part can be easily estimated, the second is more difficult to assess. What is important, however, is the fact that, in many cases, production companies can hardly comply with the requirements of the networks, though the responsibility lies also with the networks.

This law led to the overall development of the sector through the establishment of many production companies. It could be pointed out that this trend was also boosted by certain additional measures adopted by the Dutch government, such as the fact that the quota for television programmes did not include European productions not made for the network in question, or that somebody who used to work as an employee of a network could not be considered an independent producer less than two years after the establishment of his/her company. However, all of these measures do not seem to have been really effective, since, despite the foundation of a significant number of companies (about 400 were established from 1996 to 2000); the majority specialized in specific programming genres and did not actually distribute material to television networks.

Also, according to De Nooij (2008), the compulsory broadcasting of programmes made by independent producers did not actually contribute to a larger number of productions or to television programmes of higher quality, since there is always less pressure upon the producers because their programmes will be sold anyway, which impacts upon the economic aspect of the issue because there is no pressure for them to reduce their prices. In fact, in some cases, the programmes that are produced by independent producers are much more expensive than they would have been if they had been produced by the networks, due to the fact that independent producers are more skilled and appropriately equipped.

The following chapter deals with empirical analyses and discussions.

## **CHAPTER THREE: DISCUSSION OF APPROACHES TO THE DIVERSITY OF CONTENT**

The third chapter deals with the presentation of empirical approaches to assessing the degree of diversity. This is achieved through specific levels and frameworks. For instance, the empirical distinction between policy and non-policy approaches is important, because in this way the different methodology followed by different types of approaches is clarified as well. Moreover, in this chapter the empirical approaches are analysed and compared.

### **3.1. Policy and non-policy approaches**

The present chapter primarily attempts to determine the common basis of policy approaches, with regard to studying content, as well as for their differences from the non-policy approaches by reporting and analysing their individual features based on empirical examples. Beyond that, the correlation between policy approaches and content diversity also requires a semantic analysis, since, in this way, the approaches that deal with the study of the diversity of content and studying content in general, are made more explicit.

In order to study diversity from a non-policy perspective and place it within new methodological platforms as an element with which to study the pattern and function of television programming competitiveness, it is necessary to define diversity as a concept within this approach and distinguish its meaning from when it is viewed as a policy issue, as well as to clarify the differences between these two approaches. The divergence of meaning, however subtle, serves two separate directions as the empirical approaches of this chapter will show below. Additionally, this analytical chapter will establish clearer linkages between the two approaches to diversity – through the analysis that will follow – resulting in a complete framework which will answer the questions of this research regarding the development of the content through its diversity. This research claims that the study of the total development of content and its related concepts, such as content diversity, requires a multi-dimensional approach, which surpasses the limits of policy approaches, taking into account other directions as well. As will be further analysed in this chapter, from a non-policy perspective, diversity – to the degree it exists – is the result of the schedule planning techniques used by those responsible for programming and by television channels in general,

so as to form a distinct programme, which will also be competitive and profitable.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, diversity as a policy issue differs vastly, yet shares basic points with regard to methodology, as will be shown in the rest of this chapter: Diversity as a policy objective is interrelated with the marketplace of ideas. The degree of democratic procedures is reflected in the free flow of ideas and viewpoints and this is what is examined within the scope of diversity from a policy perspective. Brunner and Chen (1978, pp.317-328) approach diversity as a policy objective with semantic clarity, arguing that it is perceivable as the free flow of ideas and that a comprehensive framework of policy research needs to be designed. On the other hand – and this is the interesting feature of the twofold view of diversity, both as a policy and as a business matter – the authors in the same article (Brunner and Chen, 1978) refer to the part advertising plays in the programming production, seeking profitability and not particularly the diversity of ideas and viewpoints. Obviously, this approach is viewed from the perspective of the content supplier and this discussion, which is not of relevance to this thesis, concerns other issues, as, for example, the reception-side approach.

The quality of a perspective for use in policy can be analysed within the framework of the marketplace of ideas, a rationale which emanates from the Socratic dialectic method and has an important role in the clarification of the notion of policy, in particular when the concept is associated with issues pertaining to policy strategies. Herein lies also the key point of the notional issue regarding the distinction between policy approaches that study content, and those that adopt a content diversification perspective in their study and concern themselves more with internal channel strategies, seeking the highest possible ratings. In other words, it is a conceptual clarification between policy and non-policy approaches within the context of the marketplace of ideas. However, in what way is the concept of the marketplace of ideas interwoven with content diversity and its policy aspect? Rosenfeld (1976) in *Fordham Law Review* deals extensively with the marketplace of ideas in its philosophical dimension, as a derivative of the principle of freedom, and as an element of the free public expression of views and ideas, regardless of the degree of their acceptance and reflection in society. The author cites also Stuart Mill's views on the marketplace of ideas, who claims that opinion diversity within society and the protection of the free flow of opinion contribute to the perception of a healthy society. Habermas (1962) refers to the concept of the public sphere and to its significance. He distinguishes it from the private sphere and compares it with the

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<sup>24</sup>The correlations between a channel's profitability and viewer ratings, as well as the role of audience measurement companies in this process are discussed in the introduction.

institution of justice, more specifically with a court. With regard to the relation between the public sphere and public opinion, Habermas states: “The public sphere in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society” (1962, p.30). Rosenfeld (1976) includes in his study the regulatory issues arising from the correlation between the marketplace of ideas and the public interest within the context of broadcasting. Even though this particular study (1976) is not considered up to date, it poses critical questions about the matter. For instance, it discusses the issue of media licensing, on the basis of the media’s obligation to air every idea and opinion, and to defend the principles of pluralism and diversity. The rationale of the marketplace of ideas is associated in some cases with the degree of outflow and the promotion of truth through the mechanisms of the free market, even though this association with the economic aspects of the market reveals the failure of the market itself to establish objectively the marketplace of ideas, in order to serve its constituent ideological basis. On the contrary, the marketplace of ideas is directed and adjusted according to economic and competitive market implications (Goldman and Cox, 1996). Piety (2007), along the same lines, approaches the matter from the perspective of commercial speech and discusses the difficulties in practically applying the principle of the marketplace of ideas. For example, she refers (2007) to how politicians engage in pre-election promotional campaigns and the way in which these could be regulated within the context of commercial speech.

Through these approaches, the problematic points of the marketplace of ideas become tangible, when it is considered not as a notion anymore, but as an idea – which is formed through multiple factors – applicable to the market itself. The basic question is how the protection of the marketplace of ideas can be ensured by regulations, a question which fails to find a commonly accepted answer. What is clear though, is the relation of the marketplace of ideas with content, two concepts in absolute accordance, since what is essentially examined by the marketplace of ideas is the diversity of content with regard to ideas, views and opinions. Nevertheless, apart from that, the process of studying opinion diversity (or viewpoint diversity) presupposes interdependence with other dimensions, which also determine the degree of viewpoint diversity. For instance, the content production phase or the content distribution phase are determinant factors for the final outflow of content. Van Cuilenburg (2002) locates diversity as occurring on this basis, namely that of the marketplace of ideas, as an objective purely for policy and defines its notion as identical to content heterogeneity. Despite this simplistic approach, however, she follows a step-by-step rationale

which results eventually in the conclusion that the whole philosophy surrounding the diversity of media content originates in society itself and contributes as an idea to the promotion of democratic institutions (Cuilenburg, 2002). The policy approach developed by Cuilenburg is further analysed below as well, in the framework of a comparative study of important policy approaches.

The point of interest in this study, in order for the differentiation between policy and non-policy approaches to be theoretically and semantically explained, is the content itself and its diversity. The common methodological element<sup>25</sup> in both policy and non-policy perspectives, as it will emerge from the theoretical approaches shown below, is the content itself and, in particular, the aspect of the content that is considered. It is claimed here that distinguishing between policy and business approaches is not crucial, especially with regard to the methodological aspects of the issue. For example, a policy approach, as well as a non-policy approach can deal with the outlet of the programming type, following the same categorization into genres, etc. In other words, both approaches study the content, although not necessarily content diversity; the difference typically lies in the direction that the analysis of the results follows, namely if it will be policy-based or a business-based analysis. This will become more evident below, in the analysis of the respective approaches and the comparative study that will be presented. Content diversity usually refers to a broad concept which cannot be defined. Napoli, discussing the meaning of content, claims that: “Content diversity is defined not only in terms of diversity of viewpoints, but also in terms of diversity of programme types (an imprecise, yet frequently employed unit of analysis in diversity assessments) and demographic diversity, which refers to the ethnic and gender composition of those represented in media content” (Napoli, 2001). This interpretation of the meaning of content diversity is highly problematic – or multi-levelled – since it shows that it can be approached in various ways, depending on which aspect is being examined. Napoli’s observation about the diversity of programming types, namely that it remains an imprecise unit, is a matter of great significance which is addressed throughout this research. In the next chapters, a correlation between programming types and content homogeneity or heterogeneity is drawn which also deals with this problematic dimension of diversity.

Eastman (2008, pers. Comm., 26 March), also referring to diversity, considering it as a business issue, argues about the way it is used as a business strategy: “As a practical matter,

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<sup>25</sup>The “methodological elements” refer to the various approaches employed through variables or other constituent elements and domains, which study content structure at different levels, as for example, the study of content based on programme types.

there are different strategies for different genres of programmes. More philosophically, it depends on what one means by diversity. Is it in the actor's ethnicity or nationality? Is it in the type of content (comedy, drama, music)? Is it in the type of music? The language? Must one channel (however defined), or can one consider the full array of channels – and all their multi-varied programmes – to determine whether there is diversity?" (2008). Essentially, what Eastman claims, is that the business perspective of content diversity is not a one-dimensional issue; rather it is multi-levelled and always depends on the scope of the researcher's study. This chapter presents theoretical approaches that move along two basic axes: a) diversity viewed as a content policy matter (policy approaches) and b) diversity as an issue of content structure (business approaches). The following empirical division of the two ways content diversity is considered can lead to an essential understanding of their differences and, consequently, to a proposal of an alternative framework.

## **3.2. Policy-oriented approaches**

### **3.2.1. Napoli's approach**

An interesting approach to content diversity, that addresses diversity explicitly as a policy issue, was developed by Philip Napoli. Its characterization as purely policy-oriented stems from the need to define the marketplace of ideas through the degree and outflow of the diversity of content. Napoli analyses the policy orientation of the model as follows: "I always saw the model of the diversity principle I developed as a policy making model – one that acknowledges the importance of audience behaviour more so than previous policy approaches to diversity, but certainly not one that fully integrates all we know about audience behaviour into the model" (2008, pers. Comm., 2 June). Napoli argues that "the marketplace of ideas concept has served as a guiding principle for a number of (intended) diversity-enhancing policies..." (1999, p.9). With this approach, he, broadly speaking, attempts to turn the various dimensions of diversity into social tools for studying the social aspect of content, how it promotes the marketplace of ideas and to what extent it does so. Monteiro (2006), referring to this approach, claims that Napoli, through his analysis of dimensions of diversity, attempts to highlight those elements that constitute an effective democracy, which emanates from an informed citizenry.

As can be seen in the following table, Napoli (1999) considers that media diversity can be studied and measured in three different ways. Content diversity reflects the variety of



programming, perspectives and viewpoints available to a media consumer. Exposure diversity allows for the fact that content available to an audience may not actually reach the audience and what the audience actually receives (or accepts) is equally important. Napoli delineates the diversity of exposure by differentiating between vertical exposure diversity – diversity of content within a particular channel or medium – and horizontal exposure diversity – diversity of content received by an individual audience member. Lastly, Napoli highlights source diversity as both ownership diversity – reflecting diversity in the ownership of both content and the delivery channels allocated for that content – and workforce diversity within specific media entities.

Source diversity	Content diversity	Exposure diversity
Ownership Programming & Outlet	→ Programme-Type format	Horizontal
Workforce	Demographic	Vertical
Idea / viewpoint		

Table 3. 1: Elements that constitute Napoli’s approach (1999). The three main variables are source diversity, content diversity and exposure diversity.

Each of these three dimensions consists of certain features that contribute to a more complete description, a better conception and an easier assessment of diversity. Napoli argues that the only reason for considering these dimensions as being significant is the fact that they substantially contribute to the more effective functioning of democratic procedures. More specifically, Napoli claims that: “...the key criteria that place these three aspects of diversity as most relevant to communications policymakers involve the idea that all three can be linked in meaningful ways to the effective functioning of the democratic process. That is, all relate to the extent that citizens’ rights to express ideas through the mass media are widely diffused (source diversity), that citizens have access to a diverse array of viewpoints to aid in their decision-making (content diversity/source diversity), and that, ideally, citizens engage in the consumption of varied perspectives from varied sources that facilitates well-informed decision-making” (2008, pers. Comm., 2 June). In addition, the author presents an assessment of the specific factors in order to find the most ideal method of measuring diversity.

### 3.2.1.1. Source diversity

Source diversity as a phrase captures, simply, the idea of the diversity of sources available to ‘consumers’ or the public. As an answer to the question “Who is responsible for what it is broadcast?” source diversity may be distinguished into two basic categories: Ownership and the workforce. In addition, ownership can be divided further into content ownership and the ownership of an outlet.

Napoli, referring to source diversity, claims that: “...source diversity is definitely measurable. I think the bigger problem is that there are so many potential ways of going about doing it, from basic counts of the number of different owners of media outlets, to more detailed assessments of these owners (be it in terms of gender or ethnicity, or in terms of underlying corporate structures/relationships). I think the choice of the unit is key – one could focus on content production (who are the copyright holders) or on the owners of the distribution systems (i.e., of the outlets)” (2008, pers. Comm., 2 June).

Focusing on outlet diversity, Napoli (2008) refers to media owners who are responsible for what is going to be broadcast. In this interpretation, diversity may refer to the different parameters a researcher wants to examine, such as whether the researcher wishes to examine the diversity of cable system owners (Horwitz, 2005) or the ownership status of each channel that broadcasts via a specific cable system. Furthermore, content ownership is associated with producers and, specifically, programming production. This specific dimension is as important as the previous one, since producers who create these products are also responsible for what is broadcast. Nevertheless, neither of these two aspects of ownership may be completely excluded, since media owners (outlet ownership) may be the producers of programmes as well. What is worth pointing out is the fact that media owners have the last word on programmes for distribution and/or broadcasting (Napoli, 1999, p.11). Ownership diversity may be measured in two different ways, first by counting the number of different sources to which the programmes and outlets belong; in this specific case, the degree of accessibility of sources to viewers cannot be depicted. Secondly, the measurement of sources based on their market share seems to be a better criterion in that it depicts in greater detail the dynamics of each source. In this approach, as well as in the factors related to the sources, the media workforce plays a significant role. The concept of diversity, in relation to the workforce, considers the media workforce as components of information; in this instance, this is the reason why larger potential diversity requires that personnel be selected without any

discrimination with relation to nationality, religion or sex. The idea is that a diverse workforce within a media outlet will provide for a more diverse product, such as the programming content. In the case of Greece, it would be difficult to apply this specific parameter because its mass media are still not particularly multicultural compared with other Western European countries, and citizens from non-EU and non-Western European countries enjoy limited rights. Consequently, the staff of a television channel can play a significant role in the way information is broadcast by a channel.<sup>26</sup> In assessing this parameter, a major question arises regarding the correct way to measure it, since numerical criteria alone may not be considered the most substantial method (Napoli, 1999, p.14). Similar debates about this issue have been held within the European Union as well. For instance, an earlier study on the UK was conducted by Pines (1992), which deals, in particular, with the analysis of workforce structures in British television from 1936 onwards. Julien and Mercer (1996) in a similar study, which focuses more on British cinema and specifically on the emergence of an ethnicity culture that can be developed through cinema, for instance with the appearance of actors of colour, claim that: “Ethnicity has emerged as a key issue as various ‘marginal’ practices (black British film, for instance) are becoming de-marginalized at a time when ‘centred’ discourses of cultural authority and legitimation (such as notions of a trans-historical artistic ‘canon’) are becoming increasingly de-centred and destabilized, called into question from within” (p.453). Therefore, the issue of workforce diversity, which is mentioned in Napoli’s approach (1999) as well, on the one hand, is directly linked to content diversity, on the other, however, it is a complex issue that extends beyond policy discussions, since it falls within the broader debate on ethnic culture and the representation of cultural groups or tendencies within the content. Napoli, attempting to determine whether there exists a correlation between workforce diversity and content forming, in other words whether workforce diversity affects the content, claims that: “Frustratingly, there has been little, if any, rigorous work examining this question. I think there is a lot of room for further inquiry in this area. This is one of the main reasons why regulations designed to foster workforce diversity in the U.S. have been scaled back as much as they have – so much so that the question today of whether such regulations have any meaningful bearing on content isn’t even really discussed anymore. Rather, the regulations I think are approached as an end in and of themselves,

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<sup>26</sup>With regard to the media workforce, this specific parameter seems to apply undoubtedly more so to multicultural societies such as the USA, where much importance has been given to the subject. Supervisory bodies in the radio and television sectors, as the FCC’s Equal Employment Opportunity has introduced measures against discrimination against workers and provides at the same time incentives for promoting programmes targeted at minority groups.

designed to create more opportunities for women and minorities but not really directed at fostering significant changes in content” (2008, pers. Comm., 2 June).

Therefore, the issue of workforce diversity has various aspects and how it is interpreted depends on the perspective from which the researcher examines it. For instance, a researcher may approach it from its social dimension, by looking at the participation of minority groups in the media business, whether this means in administrative positions or in positions directly connected with content production. The researcher could even examine the way and the degree to which minority groups affect content development, an issue that Napoli considers impossible to discuss on a policy level, even though there is room for such a discussion. The case of Cyprus and specifically of Cypriot public radio and television is a typical example, where, due to the specific political circumstances, Turkish Cypriots, who are allocated a number of hours each week to present a programming schedule in Turkish, are also employed. In this sense, workforce diversity is a complex issue, since it functions differently depending on the different circumstances in each country.

#### **3.2.1.2. Content diversity**

The concept of content diversity aims to provide a full description and analysis of the programmes that are broadcast by media outlets. In this specific approach, programming content should be split into three categories: the format/programming type, the programme’s demographic profile and, finally, the ideas or the views expressed.

Diversity, in reference to format/programming type, refers to the types of programming available and any issues surrounding them, such as policy implementation based on economic and social aspects, and various types of assessment. The main issue here is the options available to viewers, as the more types of programmes there are broadcast, the greater prevalence of diversity. Of course, in order to estimate diversity based on the type of programme, other variables, such as the broadcasting time of these programmes, should be taken into consideration. Diversity could alternatively be described as the types of programmes provided in a specific television slot (morning slot, primetime slot). Nevertheless, the bigger problem here is the fact that there is no classification of programming that is accepted by researchers (Napoli, 1999 pp.18-19).

Diversity, in reference to a programme’s demographic profile, and associated with the types of programming and workforce described above, refers to the demographics of the individuals

featured within electronic media programmes and determines whether minority groups, and their preferences and views are reflected in programming content (as well as whether they are defined based on criteria such as ethnicity, sex and religion). In this instance, the main subject of the investigation is an examination as to whether these groups and standpoints are sufficiently portrayed compared to their position in society.

The last element related to media content is diversity associated with the ideas and views that are shown (ideas/viewpoints diversity). This parameter is the most difficult to digest, at least conceptually, and it is equally difficult to assess. Diversity of ideas refers to the diversity of viewpoints and of social, political and cultural perspectives represented within the media. Napoli feels this closely aligns with the metaphor of the “marketplace of ideas”. The main aim of the concept of idea diversity is to analyse the ideas presented at the political, social and cultural levels, in order to find out whether they are sufficiently represented vis-à-vis their position within society. Assessing and analysing this is extremely difficult, especially when one notes that the element of subjective interpretation is inevitably present in any approach.<sup>27</sup>

### **3.2.1.3. Exposure diversity**

Exposure diversity is the output produced by a television product, as well as by media products in general, as perceived by media consumers. The definition of exposure diversity is practically a cornerstone of the communication process of the source-message-receiver approach. According to McQuail (1992), how the message “as sent” is perceived when it is “as received” is the underlying issue here. The issue is also whether there is enough audience exposure to diverse content. Researchers examine how viewers perceive what they are shown and are exposed to. For the most detailed compilation of viewer habits, Napoli adopts the distinction developed by Entman and Wildman (1992), referring to horizontal exposure diversity and vertical exposure diversity. The former refers to the distribution of audiences across all the available content options, while vertical exposure diversity refers to the diversity of the consumption of content by individual audience members and analyses the elements that make them opt for certain programmes and reject others.

Valcke’s approach (2004) is along the same lines as Napoli’s, therefore, it does not require a separate analysis. However, Valcke proposes another parameter – that of the geographical

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<sup>27</sup>The fact that in the USA diversity is assessed by using only quantitative criteria, when there was an effort to measure and assess the views expressed and shown, with the aim of increasing these views and their diversity, might indicate the difficulty in measuring it. The quantification of data is a complex matter and the reason why the researcher chooses quantitative approaches should always be clear.

distribution of ownership and, specifically, ownership at national and local levels, associating this factor with the power of the channel and the region where it broadcasts, an interesting parameter, especially when studied in relation to the produced content. Of interest as well is Valcke's analysis of her approach in a recent article (2011), where she discusses its similarities with Napoli's approach (1999). She mentions in particular that they use the same components but with different terminology. For instance, while Napoli (1999) employs the terms "source diversity" and "exposure diversity", Valcke (2011) replaces them with "supplier / provider diversity", "product diversity" and "exposure / use diversity", arguing that she highlights a further categorization with subcomponents that focus both on the quantitative and the qualitative dimension of diversity (Valcke, 2011).

### **3.2.2. Van Cuilenburg's approach to content "reflection" and "openness"**

The second, and equally as important, approach is that posited by Jan van Cuilenburg (1999), which is also considered as being a purely policy-orientated approach. Its orientation towards the policy dimension originates in the concept of access, which is understood as the social responsibility to facilitate the participation of citizens in the information society. Van Cuilenburg (1999) indeed employs the key terms "inclusion" and "exclusion" to emphasize the correlation with the social aspects of the issue. Bardwell, Brands and van Niort (2002) claim that it revolves around the idea of a democratic society, based on freedom of expression – what van Cuilenburg (1999) calls "access for ideas" and Napoli (1999) "idea / viewpoint" diversity. The author bases his study on the belief that media diversity is related to media content, and defines it as "the heterogeneity of media content in terms of one or more specified characteristics" (p.188). Van Cuilenburg claims that diversity is one of the three main features to which the media have to respond in order to adequately fulfil their role. The other two features involve media access and freedom. McQuail and Cuilenburg (2003) claim that media freedom is associated with the freedom of the media to operate and that freedom to access information is related to the possibility of people, groups of people, organizations or institutions participating in the communication process and, specifically, the creation of media content, which is, ultimately, a process related to the possibility of sending and receiving messages. Focusing, thus, on diversity, in order to analyse it effectively, two basic parameters should be taken into account:

- 1) Reflection

## 2) Openness

According to van Cuilenburg (1999), it is extremely difficult for these two features to coexist, as a number of conditions, which will be described in the next sections, should but do not exist in harmony. Nevertheless, media outlets often try to reach a balance between these two options in order to cover conventionality and social change.

### 3.2.2.1. Reflection

The first element of van Cuilenburg's approach – reflection – sparks off discussions relating to wider issues about how the media engage with society in such a way as to reflect, pro rata, the distribution of preference, opinion, allegiance or other characteristics as they appear in the population. If this is the case, then the media adhere to reflection as the norm for ensuring media diversity. As can easily be perceived, media content proportionally reflects differences in politics, religion, culture and social conditions in society in a more or less proportional way. Although this reflection appears to be a logical form of diversity, because it reflects reality as it is, nevertheless this criterion is rather weak and conservative because the reflective logic of the media is based more on major trends and views and on conventional perceptions, substantially reinforcing existing preferences and habits. That said, according to van Cuilenburg, even in this case, the media can hardly reflect reality properly. In addition, the quality of the content is crucial for this approach. Accordingly, another distinction based on quality deals specifically with expressive quality and cognitive quality (van Cuilenburg, 1999, pp. 191-192).<sup>28</sup> In cases where the approach that is applied is that of reflection, then the expressive quality of the media is reinforced, as the latter seems to comply with the existing proportional reflection and presents things in a way that contributes to their preservation. The more the media show reflective diversity, the greater their expressive quality for democracy, i.e., the more they politically express the existing opinions, goals and values in society. On the other hand, if the media are as open as is logically possible, this may increase the cognitive quality of opinions in society. Thus, media may sharpen people's knowledge and opinions. Finally, another important issue related to this approach is that it is associated with the marketplace of ideas, a theoretical approach that has its sources in market economics. Diversity best flourishes in a free marketplace of ideas. On the other hand, media products

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<sup>28</sup>Expressive quality and cognitive quality are associated with their respective form of diversity. If, for instance, reflection is the existing form of diversity, then this means that it is the expressive quality according to which the major trends, views, rules and habits are reproduced. On the other hand, if media are as open as is logically possible, this may increase the cognitive quality of opinions, discussions and debates in society.

have their own characteristics, particularly in relation to very high costs. According to this concept, if people can freely enter this marketplace to exchange information and opinions, without any constraints issued by the government or any other party, then cultural variety and diversity may be expected to be found (van Cuilenburg, 1999, pp. 193-195). As mentioned above, the market itself can be left unregulated to some extent with regard to various aspects of diversity or limits can be set, for example, through market concentration. Moreover, according to van Cuilenburg (1999), diversity will only result from a marketplace of ideas if the number of different providers of information is large and competition between them is full and fair, so that power dominance does not exist. It also has to be assumed that ‘buyers’ of information are fully informed about the marketplace. That is, the market must be transparent, so that viewers may obtain a clear conception of what information in media markets is available to them. With regard to competition within the market, it may either be fierce (fierce competition) or moderate (moderate competition). Under conditions of fierce competition, media markets tend toward market conformity and consequently to reflective diversity. The imperative is to align media diversity with dominant ideologies, which are often termed middle of the road preferences and demand. This specific conclusion is due to the fact that fierce competition leads to minimum risk-taking and market conformity. As can easily be perceived, this trend is closely related to expressive quality.

#### **3.2.2.2. Openness**

Openness is the second feature of this approach, where – contrary to reflection – media uniformity, in arithmetically absolute terms, provides perfectly equal access to channels for all people and all ideas in society. The issue here is whether content distribution within the media is such that perfectly equal attention is given to all identifiable preferences, streams, groups or positions in society. This specific form of diversity is extremely important, as it can contribute to social change through the promotion of minority ideas, views, groups or movements, thus contributing to a change in majority positions. Openness is consistent with cognitive quality, an attitude consistent with the thought that, through this specific form of diversity, social discussion and the exchange of different views have an impact, providing more complete information, a situation that may lead to the amplification of existing views or to the adoption of new ones. With regard to its connection with the market, openness is associated with moderate competition, which is a factor promoting change, as markets offer media professionals space to experiment, serve niches and minority preferences, and take



risks. Thus, moderate media competition works in alignment with market dynamics, and thus provides a greater and more equal distribution of ideas and beliefs. Consequently, this specific attitude leads to cognitive quality within the media.

### 3.2.3. Approaching diversity in “local television news” – An FCC study

The recent study by George and Oberholzer-Gee (2011), on behalf of the Federal Communications Commission, addresses the issue of viewpoint diversity in television news, a matter that concerns Napoli as well and features in his approach. The basic difference here is that a clearly thematic study is presented, which elaborates on dimensions exclusively related to the issue of viewpoint diversity in television news.

<b>Metrics for viewpoint diversity</b>	<b>Variables on ownership</b>	<b>Viewership</b>
Issue diversity	(link the supply of diversity in media markets with measures of competition)	(the effects of diversity on viewership*)  *Nielsen’s data are used
Political diversity		
Local diversity		

Table 3. 2: Variables and their classification, used by George and Oberholzer-Gee (2011) in their approach to viewpoint diversity.

More specifically, this approach employs three main metrics to assess viewpoint diversity: The first set of metrics concerns issue diversity, which pertains to news coverage, namely the diversity of topics presented during each broadcast and the temporal distribution of the topics covered by television news. The authors (2011) categorize news coverage using keywords – similarly to genre categorization (they could be viewed as topic genres) – and they analyse the correlation of time with each keyword-topic. In other words, what percentage of time is spent on each topic, in every news bulletin? Secondly, there is political diversity, which

primarily studies the allocation of time given by each channel to politicians and political parties, but also how much emphasis is placed on the coverage of current political issues. The third category of this study examines local diversity. Here, local diversity refers to the amount of time allocated to references of particular places. That is, diversity regarding events that happen in other towns and generally the frequency of local references within the broader coverage. The common element this study shares with the previous ones lies in the way it approaches ownership – what Napoli, for instance, calls source diversity. For instance, the authors (2011), with regard to their approach to ownership, suggest variables, such as the linear relation of television channels and television parent channels. Furthermore, they examine ratings according to social groups (blacks, Hispanic and the total population), in relation to the afore-mentioned variables (i.e., issue diversity, political diversity, local diversity).

Viewpoint diversity essentially refers to the topics that constitute the news coverage broadcast in news bulletins and informational shows in general. Coverage is an indispensable part of content; therefore, it is relevant to the discussion of content diversity. Nevertheless, it concerns a different level from the one characterized as genre diversity. If this issue is examined thoroughly, it will become clear that it is actually a fused subcategory of informational genres. For instance, if the coverage of the genre “Information Bulletins / News” is analysed, that is, if the topics that constitute this genre in a specific news bulletin or informational show are categorized, then the degree of diversity of the topics that constitute the genre in question, in a given television show, can be calculated. In other words, this is diversity with regard to coverage, which is linked to the content, much like genre. The point here is to delineate the connection of news/informational (the genre that covers news reports) content coverage with viewpoint diversity, as well as determine in which ways coverage diversity can be assessed.<sup>29</sup>

Peter, Vreese and Semetko (2003), attempt to formalize this connection in their study on coverage diversity in the UK and other European countries. They divide viewpoint diversity into two subcategories: Nominal diversity and thematic diversity. The concept of nominal diversity was firstly used by Allen and Izcaray (1988). According to Peter, Vreese and Semetko (2003), by employing Allen and Izcaray’s (1988) initial definition, nominal diversity is interpreted as the number of issues a news or informational agenda comprises.

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<sup>29</sup> A diverse agenda is not the same as viewpoint diversity. If we analyse or record news coverage this does not necessarily mean we are recording viewpoint diversity. For instance, a news bulletin may present only news topics and no views or opinions.

This means they approach the topics that are covered from a quantitative perspective. Nonetheless, they are also concerned with the qualitative dimension of coverage diversity and, thus, they employ the concept of thematic diversity, namely the way in which a topic is broadcast and the different aspects that are covered. Allen and Izcaray's (1988) interpretation with regard to thematic diversity is as follows: "Thematic agenda diversity concerns the semantic variety of issues on the agenda of a particular social unit. Even if different social units have the same nominal diversity (i.e. name the same number of issues), their thematic diversity may differ" (p.45). This means that if two different new bulletins present the same issue at the same time, for example the economy, and the first one associates it with unemployment, while the other with inflation, then they have the same nominal diversity but a different thematic agenda.<sup>30</sup>

The main conclusion to be drawn from the above discussion is that viewpoint diversity is a measurable concept, as is the case with other aspects of content diversity as well, such as the diversity of programming genre. Moreover, viewpoint diversity (or opinion diversity) constitutes an indispensable part of content diversity and can be identified more easily in specific genres, as, for instance, in informational shows that have more explicit coverage.

When we compare the above approaches with regard to viewpoint diversity, it becomes clear that there are many variables with which to assess viewpoint diversity and their selection depends primarily on which point the researcher wishes to focus on. In the sixth chapter, an in-depth analysis of viewpoint diversity is presented, which seeks to make the various constituent structures and features more comprehensible.

#### **3.2.4. Stirling's approach**

In his theory of diversity, Stirling (1998) proposes an approach that may be applied to a wide range of disciplines, from sociology to economics, biology and environmental studies; it can be applied, of course, to communications studies as well (p.35). This is the reason why Stirling's approach is purely theoretical and not empirical, in contrast with Napoli's approach, mentioned above, for instance, which focuses specifically on content diversity. This was a point of concern, bringing into question the inclusion of this approach in this

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<sup>30</sup> According to this, nominal diversity alone does not sound very useful, since it does not record the actual level of viewpoint diversity, but the coverage category. This is the reason why the concept of thematic diversity is of great importance, with regard to the gap created by nominal diversity.

study. Stirling identifies three basic elements that need to be analysed in order to describe diversity. These elements are:

- a) The variety of programmes broadcast<sup>31</sup>
- b) Balance
- c) The disparity or heterogeneity of the types of programmes

Even if the components of Stirling's approach seem, at first, to have developed separately, they are actually interrelated through diversity theory. According to this theory, if one of these features changes, then the rest may also be affected (Ranaivoson, 2007). This hypothesis will be tested as these features are analysed. However, Stirling pointed out that diversity cannot be measured using just one means; it must be measured based on the context and object of each case separately. Stirling, referring to different variables that can assess diversity to some extent, following their aggregation, argues that: "This is a matter on which there can be no final definitive general position (or single scalar 'measure'). Any such, will depend on context and perspective. But the general approach I advocate is to make this explicit and as systematic as possible. This framework can be applied not only in other countries, but in any context whatsoever. This would include use with respect to television programming" (2008, pers. Comm., 22 December).

#### 3.2.4.1. The variety of programmes broadcast

Variety refers to the quantitative dimension of this specific approach, as it focuses on the number of different types of programmes broadcast. According to Stirling, variety is related to the number of categories that are examined (in this case, the programmes presented to the viewers) (1998). With the discussion of the location of these three elements, presented above, in mind, according to this specific approach, when the other two parameters are fixed and equal, then the greater the variety of programmes, the greater the diversity. Stirling posits that the level of 'variety' can be determined by answering the question: "How many types of programmes form television programming?" (2007). Stirling's approach makes a rational distinction between variety and diversity, two concepts that have a common notional basis but different explanatory results. The following element, "balance", reinforces and

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<sup>31</sup> In order to illustrate properly them, the terms "variety" and "disparity" are presented as above. However, it is worth clarifying that this interpretation of these terms is related to the description of the diversity approach as far as mass media and communication are concerned. Stirling here thinks that both terms – where the first refers to the quantitative presentation of the programmes and the second to the qualitative dimension as it is formed with the different types of programmes – may be perceived in this way.

consolidates the distinction between these concepts and makes it even clearer.

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#### 3.2.4.2. **Balance**

The concept of balance analyses the extent to which each programming schedule is broadcast. Balance refers to how each one of the elements (the kinds of programmes in communications science) is distributed within a system (in this case, the media and, specifically, television). The concept of balance has to respond to the questions, “How much of each type of programmes do we have?” and “To what extent is each of these programmes broadcast?” The general principle of this approach also applies to this parameter, since the more even the balance, the greater the diversity of the television system (Stirling, 2007). Benhamou and Peltier (2007), referring to balance, mention: “Balance refers to the pattern in the distribution of the quantity of a specific element across the relevant categories. [...]. Balance is perfect when each category is equally represented in the population” (p.88). The interpretation provided by Benhamou and Peltier highlights some problematic points in the relation between diversity and balance, for the following reason: According to their interpretation, the concept of balance differs from diversity. On one hand, in Stirling’s approach, balance, among other elements, constitutes diversity. On the other, the degree of balance depends on the development of the degree of diversity. Taking into consideration Benhamaou and Peltier’s above-mentioned approach, balance is essentially created based on the given programming genres in each case, without indicating, by itself, an existence or lack of diversity. It functions as an internal “motor” that enhances diversity, if there is indeed diversity and the extent to which it appears.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that this approach, despite the fact that it was applied by UNESCO in the analysis of media content, is a general framework, which broadly originated in the biological and not in the sociological disciplines. Therefore, there are doubts regarding its application – and especially regarding its potential and the ways it can be applied – in other fields and disciplines. Benhamou and Peltier (2010) refer to one of the basic issues that arises due to the broad spectrum of this approach: “The Stirling model focuses on the production side only, which is probably due to the heritage of ecological reasoning. However, in the field of culture, a high level of diversity supplied cannot be considered an objective per se – it has to correlate to a high level of diversity consumed. This means that production should be “correctly” distributed” (p.89).

### 3.2.4.3. **The disparity or heterogeneity of programmes**

The last of the three parameters is related to the differentiation of programmes. This specific parameter is the qualitative element of this approach, as it aims to classify and, consequently, assess the features of each type of programming in order to distinguish any differences between them. It should be, however, pointed out that this specific parameter contributes to the classification of each type of programme, based on its features. This specific parameter, through comparison with the previous parameters, will respond to the question, “How different from each other are the various types of programmes that are broadcast?” As with the other parameters in this approach, the more disparate the programming types, the greater the diversity.

This specific approach can be described concisely using an example taken from the work of Ranaivoson (2007). In this example, we suppose that a radio channel plays 100 different French pop songs, five of which are played every hour and the rest are played frequently. In order to increase variety, the channel should increase the number of songs from 100 to 150. If the channel would like to achieve more balance, the frequency of the songs played more often should be reduced and the frequency of those played less often should be increased. Finally, to increase the disparity of the songs, the radio channel should include other kinds of songs/music, i.e., playing folk music instead of only pop songs.

If the above policy approaches are studied comparatively, it will be concluded that, on the one hand, they converge as to their general framework, that is, with respect to their perception of policy approaches, in that these approaches study the degree of ideas and viewpoints outflow, as elements that establish democratic processes. On the other hand, however, they are substantially different from each other with regard to the way they attempt such approaches and, consequently, with regard to the way in which they consider the constituent elements – namely the variables and the components – that form them. Their common feature – mentioned in the beginning of this chapter as a hypothesis – is that they focus on content. In other words, they deal primarily with the diversity of content. However, content diversity is a broad and general notion. The orientation of policy approaches towards specific directions places content diversity within particular frameworks. What does the researcher wish to examine in the content? Towards which direction do they move? In these policy approaches, the study of viewpoint diversity outflow (this is not a term applied in every case, because the terminology used in each approach varies accordingly) and the degree

of its reflection from the medium to the audience, set specific research axes to the policy approaches studied above, along which they move. It is particularly interesting, however, to observe the different ways in which each approach addresses the issue. Nevertheless, in such approaches where the focus of the study is the content, it should be explicitly stated which dimensions of the content are being studied, especially nowadays that technological and financial rearrangements have turned content diversity into a multifaceted issue (Napoli, 2011). When the study of content diversity is discussed, for example, there are several parameters that should be taken into consideration, such as the classification of programming genres.

Stirling's approach (1998), for instance, if studied with regard to its application, will show that behind its theoretical dimension, there is a rather "mathematical" approach concerning its "way of thinking". Such a "computational" application was attempted by Benhamou and Peltier (2010) on behalf of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, practically applying the three axes, namely variety, balance and disparity. With regard to the theoretical review, it is claimed that Stirling's approach (1998) does not have a clear orientation towards content phases. That is, whether the content production (source) phase or the content outflow phase (outlet) is discussed, hence it is not easy to distinguish between diversity produced, diversity distributed and diversity consumed. It is argued here that it is a rather general approach that leaves open the possibility for alternative applications. Another issue regarding Stirling's approach is about disparity, the third parameter, and specifically to what extent it can easily be applied to content. The study does not account for the way in which disparity is approached. For instance, divergence between two programmes of the same genre can lie in any feature, which makes the delimitation of the area, within which a possible divergence can be detected, a priori necessary. On the contrary, Napoli (1999) defines more clearly his approach to such issues, since it lays out more explicitly - with regard to source diversity - the processes of programming production and broadcasting, while it categorizes content outflow (exposure diversity) into horizontal and vertical axes. The important element of Napoli's approach (1999) is that it distinguishes between the quantitative and qualitative content aspects. Exposure diversity, for example, refers to quantitative approaches, whereas content diversity is mostly concerned with the qualitative aspects, such as the programming type format. Its policy orientation emerges mainly from the subcomponents "demographic" and "idea / viewpoint", since the notional core of this approach regarding the marketplace of ideas is more distinct there. Napoli attempts to extend the consideration of the policy issues,

arising from this approach, in his study about the locality of diversity (n.d.). More specifically, he applies his approach through a micro – analysis, since what he basically tries to do in his study about the locality of diversity (n.d.) is to “construct” some subcomponents, which will follow the features of his main study. What is claimed here is that Napoli, through this study (n.d.), aims to make the policy orientation of his original approach even more prominent than it was, at least at the level of studying ownership, in the sense that the parameter of studying ownership is purely policy-oriented. It should be stressed that Napoli’s approach (1999) is designed in such a way as to be applicable to the totality of the content, since it refers to programme-type format in general. Conversely, the study by George and Oberholzer-Gee (2011) can only be applied to news. Evidently, the difference between these two approaches lies in the following point: George and Oberholzer-Gee’s study (2011) focuses exclusively on the assessment of viewpoint diversity, a sub-category of content diversity which can only be approached through television news and informational talk shows. Napoli (1999) conversely, deals with a quite broader study of the content, without attempting to apply it though, whereas George and Oberholzer-Gee (2011) practically apply the metrics regarding viewpoint diversity. Another feature of George and Oberholzer-Gee’s study (2011) is that it considers the factor of time. It is essentially an approach which emphasizes the temporal distribution of the metrics that constitute the study. For instance, in order to assess the degree of political diversity, the time dispensed to every politician or political party is taken into account. The same applies to the other two metrics, namely issue diversity and local diversity. The result of time distribution in these parameters is considered as well, in order to assess the final degree of viewpoint diversity. Valcke’s approach (2004) presents many similarities with Napoli’s (1999), with regard to the components and subcomponents it employs. It was developed based on Napoli’s approach and it does not differ from it essentially. There is, however, a divergence in its terminology, for example, while Napoli uses the terms source, content and exposure diversity, Valcke replaces them with supplier/provider diversity, product diversity and exposure/use diversity, respectively. Valcke – because of these similarities – in a recent study (2011) analyses the differentiation of her approach from Napoli’s.

The above approaches were selected for the following two reasons: Firstly, a decisive factor in this choice was the composition of their constituent components, which are purely policy-orientated. In some approaches, such as Napoli’s, the policy orientation is more prominent, whereas, in others, for instance in Stirling’s, the role of the components in the general process



of studying content from a policy perspective is ambiguous. This issue appears particularly when the various studies and approaches do not apply exclusively to media content, but examine diversity in an interdisciplinary way. Secondly, the above approaches share a common starting point, namely they study and assess the degree of content diversity, but apart from the similarities, they show substantial differences as well, which were previously analysed. Both their similarities and differences facilitate a well-founded understanding of the rationale underlying these approaches and the determination of how many different components can be employed in approaching content diversity, which is also the main goal of this research. The following section will present some business approaches, which study content diversity as well, but no longer within the scope of policy research.

<b>Approach</b>	<b>Basic approach parameters</b>	<b>Common points for measuring and assessing diversity</b>	<b>Different points for investigating the approaches</b>	<b>Of special interest to...</b>
<b>Napoli</b>	a) Source b) Content c) Outlet	A) Proportionality as regards the promotion of views, ideas, beliefs and preferences (content of programmes)	A) Behaviour of the viewers B) Studying the workforce	...media ownership and production
<b>Valcke</b>	a) Supplier b) Product c) Outlet	B) Groups that are represented through the views that are presented C) Connection	A) Geographical dynamics of the media and the Media ownership	
<b>Van Cuilenburg</b>	a) Reflection b) Openness	between diversity and market rules	A) Connection with the television quality B) Connection with the intensity of market competition	...focus on the importance of the ideas presented and the way of presenting them
<b>Stirling</b>	a) Number of programmes b) Balance of programmes c) Differentiation of types of programmes		A) Interaction between the elements of the basic diversity parameters	...the analysis of programming types

Table 3. 3.: In this table a brief comparative presentation of diversity approaches is set out and the components that constitute these approaches are presented.

### 3.3. Other approaches with a different orientation and category of study

The common feature of the following approaches is that they go beyond the policy orientation which was observed in the previous purely policy-orientated approaches. This policy orientation stems from the rationale of the marketplace of ideas, as was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, which is directly associated with the idea and viewpoint diversity of content. As will be shown through the following empirical approaches, both policy and non-policy approaches share their focus on studying content and it is exactly from this feature that the rationale for their selection and correlation originates. The question that arises, however, is whether the concept of diversity is only linked to the policy direction and, consequently, if other approaches that do not focus on policy issues were to be studied, would it be reasonable to talk about diversity? This question is answered by the following approaches, which – as it will be shown further down – are not policy-oriented and they do not address content diversity, but content differentiation. Essentially, they are not unrelated, since they both analyse the content and in some cases there is even a “convergence” of the two directions due to other similarities they present, which will be comparatively explored at the end of this chapter. In addition, there is the following sub-question: From what sort of state does content differentiation emanate? From diversity, which is associated – to some extent – with content heterogeneity or from content homogeneity? If it is a result of content homogeneity, then it is not possible to discuss the differentiation of diversity. Bourreau (2003) relates the issue of content differentiation to mimitism and the level of quality of a certain channel in connection with the advertising support this channel receives, a relation which reflects on content development. An early but characteristic approach is Steiner’s (1952) which, although referring to the case of the radio, shares many common features regarding the logic of programming. Bourreau (2003), discussing Steiner’s approach, argues: “...Steiner (1952) [...] compares the program choice made in a monopoly and an oligopoly television market. Channels are assumed to maximize their audience. There are different types of programs and viewers are divided into groups according to which program type they prefer. Steiner shows that program variety is larger when programs are provided by monopoly than by competing channels. The intuition of this result is as follows. Assume that there are two channels and that a majority of viewers prefer a popular program, whereas a

minority of viewers prefer a specialized program. If two channels compete for viewers, it may be more profitable for each channel to capture a share of the audience of the popular program than to serve all the audience of the specialized program. On the other hand, a monopolist who operates both channels finds it profitable to provide the two programs to maximize its total audience.” (p.196)

This issue is addressed thoroughly in the next chapter, where the minimum differentiation of the content is discussed – through an analysis and empirical study of content diversity – a crucial matter for the in-depth analysis of content development.

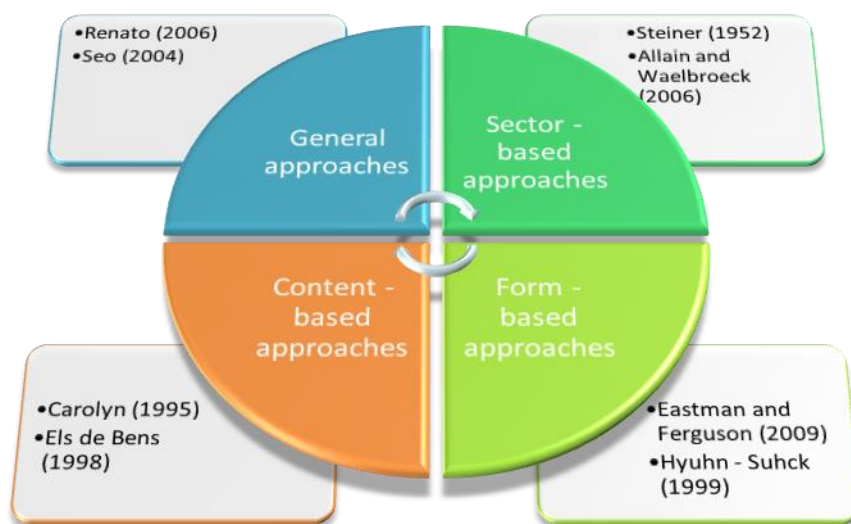


Diagram 3. 1: Categorization of the various approaches with regard to field and area of focus. The approaches are divided into general approaches, content-based approaches, sector-based approaches and form-based approaches. This diagram distinguishes between the rationales of the alternative approaches to content (author).

Content approaches can be classified with regard to the way they approach content and the content area they focus on. There are more general approaches that do not focus on any specific medium or structure and quite frequently they address a broader interdisciplinary spectrum, as in the case of Stirling’s model, which, as discussed above, can be applied on multiple levels. Seo’s study (2004), for instance, examines content based on a comparative analysis of previous content diversity studies and concludes that most of them do not contribute sufficiently to the research regarding the methodological issue of approaching

content diversity and that they employ specific methodological approaches, such as the HHI-Index. Another, more general approach to diversity is attempted by Renato (2006), who focuses on providing an analysis that answers two questions: What is a satisfactory level of optimal diversity and how can a satisfactory level of diversity be encouraged and achieved? The answer to such questions is provided by the analysis of the variables of quality and the way it relates to the concept of diversity, an issue discussed previously.

Another criterion for classifying content approaches is whether they focus on a specific medium, that is, if they are sector-based. Each medium has its own particular features. For instance, in the case of radio, content is approached differently than it is in television, even though these two media share common factors, such as audience and viewer ratings, respectively. Indicatively, the approach developed by Steiner that was discussed above concerns radio. A completely different study was conducted by Allain and Waelbroec (2006). They deal with music content, that is, with a specific type of content, and they focus on music media; this is why their approach is also sector-based.

In addition, there are approaches that concern the structure of the genres which make up the content and these are essentially the approaches that study content diversity, because the quantitative analysis of genre is one of the main factors used to assess content diversity. One example of this is the study by Carolyn (1995), which examines the tendencies in diversity with regard to the programming of prime-time zones.

Another interesting distinction is what is called form-based approaches, shown in the above diagram. This term was employed because it characterizes those approaches that do not deal with genre diversity but basically with the form of the programme, as a strategy or technique of differentiation from competitive channels. These strategies include, for example, “bridging”, “hammocking” and “stacking”. For example, Eastman (2008, pers. Comm., 26 March; 1993), employs certain variables in her research, in order to study the form of programmes, such as the “location”, which indicates the exact placement of a programme, that is, in which time zone it is located and what is broadcast before it and what follows it. Another element is “familiarity”, which studies whether a programme is new or a sequel of another one. Such variables hence, do not examine content diversity, but the placement of the content in time and space.

### 3.3.1. Content differentiation in television newscasts: An alternative approach

The view that television newscasts and informational shows are a suitable genre for the study of viewpoint diversity was previously presented, as it is a good example of the association of diversity with policy-based approaches, a connection which is difficult to locate in other genres. This happens because informational/news genres have direct implications, concerning political, social and other issues, therefore, the various ideas and opinions are easily accessible and comprehensible.

Apart from that – and this is the reason why viewpoint diversity is studied through newscasts – the main news bulletins usually attract higher viewing figures compared to other programmes. In addition, the nature of news bulletins entails addressing the element of opinion, which is not found in other genres. Due to the high viewing figures for television, programming makers schedule the main news bulletin as an independent programming zone, a fact that is also shown by AGB's categorization, which was discussed in the second chapter, in the context of programming categorization. This means that the main news bulletin zone does not include programmes or shows other than this programme, the average length of which is about forty-five minutes in Greece. According to research on Greek media dealing with the connection between young people and information-related programmes, the respondents expressed a marked preference for television news bulletins over press and radio (Aslanidou, 2000). Specifically, according to the research conducted by Aslanidou (2000), televised news bulletins are the most common and most popular source of news, since young people prefer television (79%) to radio (7.7%) or printed press and newspapers (13.3%) as their source of news and information. Aslanidou considers television a primary source of information for young people – although it should be stressed that she refers to the pre-internet era – and believes that family environment greatly affects how the source of information is chosen (2000).

The study of the content of television newscasts, however, can also conversely be used for the analysis and the assessment of content diversification. Hyuhn-Suhck Bae's approach (1999) moves towards this direction and explores content diversification between prime-time newscasts by employing the following variables: Firstly, it examines the differentiation between channels with regard to the topics of the news stories and records them separately as business/economics, government/politics, sports etc., which means that the coverage of news bulletins, namely their agenda, plays a significant role in how they are differentiated from

each other. The second variable of this approach is the unique news coverage in relation to the total newscast. “Unique news” refers to the exclusive topics broadcast by a channel. Here, a comparative analysis to determine what differentiates these from competitive channels is carried out in connection with duplicated news, that is, by comparing unique news with the news broadcast by every channel. In continuance, Hyuhn-Suhck Bae (1999) classifies unique news according to the news topic categories of the first variable and assesses, in this way, from which topics unique news usually emerge, even though it is not possible to establish fixed tendencies, a fact that renders the issue highly problematic. The third variable of this approach concerns the study of international news, by quantitatively comparing them with national news.

This study essentially suggests a method with which to study the diversification of news content and this is the key point on which it differs from the approach (George and Gee, 2011) that was analysed above. George and Gee’s approach (2011) aimed at assessing the degree of viewpoint diversity in news bulletins, therefore, it has a purely policy orientation. On the contrary, Hyuhn-Suhck Bae’s approach (1999) does not deal with recording the ideas and opinions present in a news bulletin, but with the strategies of differentiating the news content. Nonetheless, even though these approaches have different goals, they do share many common elements. For instance, would it be possible for viewpoint diversity to be used as a variable for differentiating between news bulletins? Therefore, despite the different directions that these approaches take, the content itself is always the axis of convergence. The basic question posed in studies of this type, namely studies that apply certain variables to the analysis of content tendencies, asks after the reasons why these particular variables were selected. Here, Hyuhn-Suhck Bae limits the content studied only to the topics of broadcast news, exclusive/unique news coverage and international news versus national news coverage. However, she does not account for the following: If, for example, by comparing various channels, they are found to cover the same topics, then is there any coverage differentiation between the channels and, if there is, in which way and with what techniques is it achieved? It needs to be stressed that in the case of content differentiation techniques – especially with regard to newscasts – a potential analysis becomes rather more complex and challenging. There are two levels to the factors of such an analysis: The first level involves studying the genre – in this case the research deals with the news genre – and programming types. For instance, the categorization of news into topic types pertains to the first level of analysis. Differentiation, when achieved through the classification of genres and topics, is easily

detected. Aside from the analysis of genre and topic, however, there is a second level of analysis which concerns the way in which these topics are covered. For example, if a news item is broadcast from two channels at the same time – that is, the same news topic appears – then, we should ask, in which way is this specific news item being differentiated in order to attract the viewers’ interest and attention? This question refers to the second dimension of the analysis and it is difficult to define methodologically, at least at a general level. What the researcher should bear in mind is the importance of primarily presenting the variables that will be applied, but also of accounting for the reasons for their selection. One of these content differentiation variables is the programming time distribution, which is analysed in the following section.

### **3.3.2. The factor of time in scheduling**

The issue of time was presented above, with regard to studying newscasts from a policy perspective and it was also discussed in the context of programming categorization in the second chapter. In this research, the issue of time is empirically examined, within the framework of viewpoint diversity, and through this analysis, its correlation with the concept of diversity is illustrated. Therefore, the significance of the variable, time, is shown by the following observation that stems from the empirical analysis of viewpoint diversity: The time spent for the presentation of each journalistic genre or the time provided to representatives of political parties or of other groups strengthens the conclusions that are drawn with regard to the degree of viewpoint diversity. As was previously mentioned, time, as a policy objective, basically demonstrates the temporal distribution of programming diversity. For example, through the time factor, the degree of the temporal distribution of political diversity in a talk show can be assessed. In policy approaches, time is directly interrelated with opinion distribution – in its broadest sense<sup>32</sup> – within the programme. In other words, it constitutes a tool for assessing the degree and intensity of an opinion, view or idea’s projection, whether by representatives of political groups or by organizations or non-governmental organizations and social groups. Time indicates the attention a certain channel gives to people representing political or social groups, or the significance of specific news. Time, in these cases, is an indispensable part of the news. Conversely, in the case of non-policy approaches, time has a different function, that of programming zone scheduling, where the issue of the choice of time slots in programming is one of competition. As will be illustrated through the examples

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<sup>32</sup>The terms “opinion diversity” and “viewpoint diversity” are usually employed as mentioned elsewhere in the thesis.



below, time, from this perspective, is directly connected with the popularity of content, forming a relation which is “adjusted” within the broader context of television programming. In other words, time in non-policy approaches plays a purely strategic role as a component of diversification and it is examined by these approaches as such.

A typical non-policy approach is presented by Nilssen and Sorgard (1998), who examine the temporal distribution of programming in connection with the profile of programming between two competing channels. The interesting point of this study is its conclusion that time is a determinant factor of the ratings a programming schedule will achieve. Time and viewing ratings are two inextricable elements concerning television programming. This study (Nilssen and Sorgard, 1998), for instance, analyses the case of a channel trying to “beat” its competitor and to programme its newscasts earlier than the other channel. This is a typical example of programming time competition which is usually associated with the organization of prime-time zones. Another study, which addresses the issue of time, and, in particular, time scheduling based on viewers’ preferences and time habits, was conducted by Barros (1995). It concludes that, when the temporal distribution of the content is examined, methodological issues emerge due to the fact that there is frequent inconsistency regarding viewers’ habits, which are not easily anticipated.

The time factor is but a small parameter of the whole issue of the study of content, whether content is viewed as a policy issue or outside the policy framework, based on the concept of scheduling. Nevertheless, for policy-orientated approaches, the time variable can partially indicate the degree of viewpoint diversity; therefore, there is a more direct relation between time and diversity. What is interesting in this case, though, is that the difference between the two perspectives is obvious and that is the reason why the above approaches to the issue of time were selected. The goal of this selection was, on the one hand, to contrast them with the study of time as a policy issue and, on the other hand, to highlight their notional differentiation. In both cases we have essentially the same variable (“time”), which, however, functions differently in each case. In the case of policy direction, time relates to content diversity, while, in non-policy approaches, it is associated with content planning and scheduling, in other words, with programming structure. The parameter, time, cannot be studied on its own, since this would not provide us with a conclusive idea with regard to the state of the content that is being examined; it is nevertheless a useful tool for understanding the organization of spatio-temporal content.

Based on the above analysis, some meaningful conclusions can be drawn: a) Approaches to diversity can differ depending on the researcher's aim, namely whether the approach is policy-orientated or whether the aim is to study the formation of diversity within the media market (diversity management); b) there is no single common approach, but various ones, which sometimes converge with regard to some of their constituent elements and at other times are completely different; c) Content diversity can refer to many subjects. The most typical case, for instance, which appears as a common element in many of the various approaches, is the diversity of the programming's genres. This also depends on the direction followed, namely policy or non-policy. More specifically, the research question, which is predetermined by the researcher, forms the approach taken with regard to the elements that will constitute the concept of content diversity.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

The elaboration and analysis of a coherent methodological approach is particularly important, especially when much-debated matters are concerned, as is the case with content diversity. For this purpose, the methodological structures that were adopted for the data selection, as well as the way they were applied, are analysed in this chapter.

### **4.1. About the methodology**

The present chapter deals with the methodology that is followed in the empirical analyses presented in this research, which essentially address three major categories. The first concerns the analysis of genre in Greek television content, namely it analyses what is called content diversity, the categorization of the programme. The second category approaches content from the perspective of the production companies; in other words, it studies source diversity. Lastly, the third category of analysis examines the content of news bulletins from the perspective of viewpoint diversity. At the end of this thesis, the correlations between the three aspects of diversity are analysed, as well as the way the programming is developed through diversity, regardless of its various forms, namely content diversity, source diversity or viewpoint diversity, while in the eighth chapter a research study, employing more recent data, is repeated, which allows us to perform a comparison between content trends across different time periods. This chapter attempts to analyse the methodology followed in this thesis and primarily to explain the exposition and justification of the methods used for the collection of data, such as the criteria used for the time period selection, of the programming categorization and the context within which the interviews were carried out.

### **4.2. Genre analysis of television content**

One basic step in the design of research into content is the formulation of its objectives, which is done by raising research queries in order to obtain statistical or non-statistical answers. Once these research queries have been formulated, the whole research effort is carried out within a specific framework in order to obtain answers to these, quantitative or qualitative, individually, jointly or comparatively. It is therefore necessary to formulate and properly define the objectives of the research. As they are examined, it shall be determined whether they are valid or not, as well as what other results could be drawn. Following on from this, the variables that are to be examined are determined by the research queries and in turn define the method of classifying the collected data.

In this research study, the objective is to define the degree of the diversity of the output produced by television programmes on Greek public and private broadcasters. Specifically, the genre profile of the programming in the horizontal and vertical output of the television system is examined, and whether significant changes and diversifications are recorded between the examined television channels over specific periods of time or not. The concepts of horizontal and vertical programming refer to the comparative analysis of the programme, whether among selected channels or within the same channel. Horizontal programming is the comparison and analysis between the programmes of two or more channels, while vertical programming refers to analyses conducted on the programming of one channel, that is, a comparison of its shows or broadcasting zones. In addition, questions regarding the proportional difference between Greek and foreign television productions (examining, thus, the origin of the programmes), as well as the frequency of programming airing, were raised. Moreover, the qualitative and quantitative differences are examined, as regards programming typology in public and private television and if any programmes categories are preferred over other programming categories.

In this stage of the analysis, the following specific research questions arise:

1. What is the typological profile of the programme, with regard both to the horizontal and the vertical output? In this research, the typological profile of the programming is understood as the analysis of the genre distribution and classification and in some cases – where the typology allows it – as the analysis of the programming classification in sub-genres as well.
2. What are the differentiations in the programming of the channels under examination, within specific time zones? This question aims to illustrate the way in which the programming varies, with regard to genre, between the channels that are presented below, as well as between different time zones.
3. Which is the relation between Greek and foreign productions? Even though this question may be confused with the issue of source diversity, which is analysed in the next subchapter, it does not refer to the source, but instead examines the typological correlation of the programming between local and foreign productions.

Three variables are bound together which correspond to the respective research queries and are related to the basic unit recorded by the research, namely the programme:<sup>33</sup> The programming type, the type of production with regard to the country of origin and the programming airing frequency, in other words, how often the programming types are broadcast in relation to the total programming of the channel. The study of programming airing frequency can facilitate the clarification of an additional issue about diversity, that is, which programme types prevail in the channels' scheduling. This feature can bring to light significant differentiations between the television channels, with regard to which programming types they promote more intensely. The research methods applied may either be of a quantitative or a qualitative nature, while, occasionally, they may be both<sup>34</sup> (Punch, 2005). In the study of television content, it is crucial that the researcher be able to transform the quantitative features into qualitative features, since the content actually constitutes a qualitative criterion — not a quantitative one — for the assessment of television. In other words, according to Heretakis (2007), the quantitative data that are collected, namely the ratings, whether from the audience, viewers or readers, broadly speaking, form the content, since their main goal is to develop content which will be consumed by the audience and consequently promote the selling of advertising space.

It is worth confirming that the selection and use of different research methods are determined by the objective of the research and the requirements of each study each time one is carried out. In the case of this research, the approach that is followed allows for an in-depth study of the normative profile of Greek television programming and consequently of the aforementioned variables under examination. More specifically, a kind of standardized quantitative content analysis is applied, which employs statistical standards of data processing and analysis (Berelson and Lazarsfeld, 1948).

In general, content analysis (Berelson and Lazarsfeld, 1948) is a classification procedure which enables the conversion of media content – whatever its form may be – into quantitative data.<sup>35</sup> The quantification of the data will enable the classification process to be repeated and checked. This is achieved because other variables enter into the process; these variables may,

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<sup>33</sup>There is a difference between the perception of the programme as a unit that is studied separately and the concept of a programme that refers to structure or scheduling.

<sup>34</sup>This approach, of combining qualitative and the quantitative research methods, is steadily gaining ground among social scientists, since the combination of both methods is considered to produce more solid and valid results. Thus, at the initial stages of the research, the qualitative research method, aiming to formulate research hypotheses to be examined and evaluated by using quantitative research methods, is used in many research studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

<sup>35</sup>It is worth pointing out that content analysis could be of a quantitative or a qualitative nature, according to the requirements of the particular study and the objectives that are to be met.

for instance, be repeats of the broadcasting that affect the final output of the degree of content diversity. In essence, it is a method that leads to the systematic coding of media content as well as to subsequent data processing. Statistical correlations may be detected during data processing, facilitating the examination of the theoretical background of the research or the development of new conclusions through correlations and comparisons. This research, however, does not proceed with correlations; nonetheless, in the eighth chapter, some comparisons are attempted for the comparative analysis of different time periods.

During data processing with regard to the content analysis, certain crucial working stages appear (Kyriazis, 1999). Firstly, the specification of the basic unit being recorded (item) is necessary. In this case, this is the programming and in particular the broadcast (Weber, 1990). The “programme” of a channel comprises all its broadcasts. In the same way, the channels’ programmes (of public and private television) constitute the total output produced by television.

Following that, there is the categorization process. This concerns the creation of categories, formed by the researcher and determined by the broader subject of the research. These categories improve the interpretation of the unit under examination. In this study, the programming (broadcast) types that are included in the “programme” of television channels were firstly determined and afterwards classified into 11 comprehensive categories. This categorization facilitates the data processing and makes it possible to compare them with data from previous or future research. Finally, a coding system was established, in order for the presence (or the absence) of programming types in the basic unit to be measured and recorded, as well as the intensity (frequency) of the airing of certain types over others.

It is obvious that, due to the huge amount of media output, it is effectively impossible to analyse it in its entirety. In addition, considering that it is possible that the volume of data concerning the subject matter in question will be significant as well, it is therefore abundantly clear that the application of a sampling method is necessary. In other words, a selection of some kind needs to be carried out on the content sources, which will be studied in order for the requirements of the research to be met. It is thus necessary to limit the scope and the type of issue under examination and to selectively identify a representative sample of the media to be studied. The criteria for selecting which data to analyse over others differ and depend on the issue being studied in each case. Similarly, determining the method of sampling is

directly associated with the researching methodology being followed; in this case, content analysis. (Kyriazis, 1999)

<b>PROGRAMMING GENRES</b>
Information and news-related programmes
Journalistic research information-related programmes
Information-related programmes covering a wider spectrum of topics
Information-related talk shows
Human-interest talk shows
Light infotainment talk shows
Educational television shows
Specialized television shows
Television interviews/portraits
Entertainment television shows
Arts and culture television shows/programmes covering and promoting arts, letters and cultural heritage
Sports shows/sports broadcasts
Programmes dealing with religion
Television programmes for children and teenagers
News bulletins
Game shows
Reality shows
Television Series

<b>PROGRAMMING GENRES</b>
Films
Documentaries
Other shows/programmes <sup>36</sup>

Table 4. 1: This table illustrates the programming genres which are employed in the classification used by this research. This typology originated from the typology employed by AGB Hellas for Greek television and from records of television magazines. Essentially, a combined categorization was attempted, which would be practical and easy to use, and at the same time indicative of Greek television's programming.

It is possible that the selection of the sample may on many occasions be the outcome of impulsive thinking, or it may serve specific purposes. In this case, considering the above research questions and objectives that are posed, the use of intentional sampling proved to be the most suitable method (Kyriazis, 1999). His sampling method will hopefully make it easier to obtain the best and most representative sample possible. The samples should meet the requirements specified in the research and the criteria that were set out during the research planning stage.

<b>TYPES OF PROGRAMMES</b>
Information bulletins/news releases
Other information-related or journalistic programmes
Entertainment
Culture/arts

<sup>36</sup>We should point out that, despite the rigorous process of defining the programme types, there were a small number of shows that could not be classified under the defined types of programmes as presented in the above table. Consequently, these programmes (such as the telemarketing television shows) are classified under the category of 'other shows/programmes'.



Education
Sports
Television shows for children and teenagers
Television series
Films
Documentaries
Other shows/programmes <sup>37</sup>

Table 4. 2: This table illustrates the programming categories when the genres of the previous tables are included. The above table is a sub-classification of that table.

To start with, the definition and selection of the sources used, which functioned as the basis for the collection of the material, was decisive, since the data were recorded retrospectively. The data associated with the television programmes collected using different television guide magazines, such as, The Radio & Television Guide Magazine, The television Ethnos Guide Magazine, ON-OFF television Guide Magazine, as well as the electronic archives of TO VIMA Daily Newspaper and TA NEA Daily Newspaper. These particular television guide magazines and electronic archives were selected, because during the time period in question – which is mentioned below – their circulation was high and they constitute a reliable source of information with regard to television programming. Moreover, the electronic archives use the same programming categorization as AGB Hellas. The typology of AGB Hellas was cross-checked with the typology used by the magazines, in order to establish whether they refer to an accurate and updated programming categorization. Therefore, these magazines were not the only source used for the analysis of programming categorization, but they were studied in combination with an analysis of the typologies used by the Television Audience Measurement Company, AGB Hellas. Moreover, these are magazines with high circulations, such as the well-known The Radio & Television Guide Magazine, which is published by the Public Radio and Television Company, and consequently, their programming categorization is based on commonly accepted typologies, since their editors are highly experienced in

<sup>37</sup>Religious television programmes/broadcasts are classified under the category of Other Shows/Programmes as well.

television material. It is important that in 2011 it was announced that The Radio & Television Guide Magazine, against a backdrop of general cuts, would cease publication but so far it has not stopped circulating. Finally, it should be noted that these magazines, along with AGB Hellas, are the only sources that record programming categorization. Other bodies, such as the Research Institute of Applied Communication of the University of Athens, which also records television programming, based on the afore-mentioned sources, without following any other methodology. Nonetheless, it follows its own methodology with regard to news coverage recording, which will be discussed further on in this research.

Many sources have been analysed, in order to obtain the most accurate scheduling pattern for the periods under examination. In these sorts of television studies, we often find that the programming broadcast is not what is printed in the television guide and changes are made to the day's television scheduling. That is why the newspaper-insert television magazines were preferred in this study, which, due to their daily circulation, include any last minute changes.

Moreover, several significant decisions should be made with respect to the media under examination; in this case, related to the television channels that were examined, as well as the time period of the coverage. Specifically, in order to proceed with our research, five national coverage television channels, broadcasting across Greece (three private and two public)<sup>38</sup> (CIRCOM, 2004) were selected: ALPHA television, ANT1 television, MEGA CHANNEL, ET1 and NET. The selection criteria of the television broadcasters in question were defined according to television viewing ratings and television production quotas. Specifically, according to the data provided by AGB Hellas, these television channels achieve a total average viewing share of 65.5%,<sup>39</sup> thus exceeding 50% of the total viewing share. Clearly, such a percentage creates an issue with regard to the concept of diversity, since it hardly allows for the presence of smaller broadcasters and it weakens the denominator employed for their assessment. The issue of ratings and the methodology used to measure them, which is not of interest in this thesis, is a significantly broad matter, related to other areas, such as advertising (Heretakis, 2004). Moreover, these channels receive the major part of domestic productions (referring firstly to productions of television series and then to different types of

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<sup>38</sup>It needs to be clarified that, even though the public broadcaster ET3 (Greek Television 3) transmits nationally, it is the only regional public television channel in Greece. However, the regional character of ET3 lies not in the territorial coverage of its transmission, but in the regional character of its programming. It is thought of as autonomous regional programming, focusing on issues and themes concerning or related to the larger area of Northern Greece (Central Macedonia, West Macedonia, East Macedonia, Thrace and the Islands of the Northern Aegean). In terms of broadcasting time, programming is divided into news and journalistic programmes (30%), documentaries (27%), cinema and television series (15%), Art – Culture – Music (15%) and Entertainment (13%).

<sup>39</sup>Specifically, they achieved a total average viewing share of 64.5% in 2004, 65% in 2005 and 67% in 2006. AGB Hellas, *Television Yearbook 2004-2005*, Athens: 2005, p. 40. AGB Hellas, *television Yearbook 2005-2006*, Athens: 2006, p. 36.

shows).<sup>40</sup> Finally, as regards the selection of channels, the choice of three private and two public channel channels is not arbitrary; rather, it is because we wish to carry out a comparison between private and public television.

Furthermore, another issue that needs to be resolved concerns the selection of the time period; specifically, the time period under examination consisted of three week-long periods (from Monday to Friday) in the years 2004, 2005 and 2006. In other words, the periods 8-14 November 2004, 14-20 November 2005 and 13-19 November 2006 were examined. These specific time periods were selected according to a number of criteria. At first, the time periods in question should meet the criterion of being representative of the channels' scheduling pattern. Thus, November was selected, as it was close to the start of the new television season, indicating the intentions of the programmers as far as the new television season was concerned.<sup>41</sup> Further, this is the period when the first changes are made (rescheduling of shows to a different time slot, addition of new programmes or the modification of existing shows and discontinuance of television programming broadcasting). The television schedule stays in this form until January, when the winter television season begins. In addition, situations that might change the entire programming distribution, such as special political events that monopolize the media spotlight, should be avoided. This is why the author opted for time periods that could meet the above requirements. It should also be noted that during the summer the programming landscape in Greece is drastically transformed. The summer season is characterized by many rebroadcasts, therefore, it would not be a representative period. The years, namely 2004, 2005 and 2006, were selected for no particular reason, since only the time period during a year is considered an important factor and not the year as a whole. The selection of these years merely coincides with the time that this specific part of the research was conducted.

One general observation that can be made is that all research methods – qualitative or quantitative – applied in social sciences have a number of advantages and disadvantages, mainly with respect to the means by which they record and interpret facts. For this reason, selecting the most appropriate research method is essential, as it must correspond to the

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<sup>40</sup>STAR television and ALTER television have a smaller portion of the domestic productions compared to the other television channels. Specifically, STAR television does not include Greek television series in its programming; however, it includes journalistic and entertainment programmes which have a small part in its programming. Its programming consists of foreign productions (films and television series). ALTER television has a similar image as far as its programming is concerned; ALTER television did not have any organized programming zones. Its programming consists mainly of journalistic and entertainment programmes, without including any Greek television series.

<sup>41</sup>It should be pointed out that, in order to obtain the most accurate conclusions regarding the style and content of the television channels' programmes, a complete image of the entire television season under review is required.

object of the research every time. The application of this particular methodology for the analysis of genre diversity is not a superficial process but it examines all the aspects of the categorization process in-depth. Categorization constitutes the most challenging part of studying genre diversity, since it should firstly classify the material into programming categories and then programme genres (even into subgenres) in order for an accurate and objective analysis to be conducted. Moreover, the use of alternative sources to control and cross check the programming categorization lends originality to the methodology, turning it into a useful tool.

One of the most significant disadvantages of this research method is that the classifications used here and in the case of viewpoint diversity as well, as will be discussed in the next chapter, are not an inherent element of the content under examination, but are “one of the many ways of representing the social reality that is chosen by the researcher and imposed on the data” (Kyriazis, 1999). In essence, with regard to this issue, the researcher decides on the taxonomic system to be used, deciding, for instance, on the various categories. This entails the risk of subjective judgment and assessment as far as the interpretation of the data is concerned. In this case, the definition of the types of programmes and their classification into summary categories could entail risks and cause certain reactions. The classification is based to a great extent on previous related research studies (Hellman, 2001; Papathanassopoulos, 2000). Nonetheless, due to significant diversification in certain types and categories of programmes (shows), there were differences of opinion regarding the classification of certain shows or programmes into the given types or categories. For instance, there was a difference of opinion with regard to whether all information or journalistic shows or programmes should be classified under the same category or under a more specific category which could distinguish them from other information-related or similar programmes (shows). However, the classification system that is used in this research provides significant solutions with regard to the classification of shows into specific types and categories of programmes, since every type of programme was covered sufficiently.

A previous similar research study did not employ any statistical programmes, it only recorded the features under examination, with regard to the programming types that are present in Greek television and the origin of their production (Papathanassopoulos, 2000). Therefore, it can be argued that the present research examines at a more in-depth level, not only the above-mentioned issues, but also the airing frequency of the programmes (broadcasts).

Consequently, a more comprehensive view with regard to the diversity of the programming output in Greek television is provided de facto, since the basic factors that determine the quality of the television programmes produced in various recent time periods are analysed and highlighted.

#### **4.3. Empirical analysis of viewpoint diversity in main news bulletins**

The second empirical dimension of this research is the analysis of viewpoint diversity in main television news. Pritchard (2002), studying television viewpoint diversity, focuses on a particular case, that of the presidential elections in the US, specifically in 2000, and attempts to analyse the news coverage of the elections. Viewpoint diversity constitutes a special aspect of diversity, in the sense that it lacks a specific framework, within which it could be studied and analysed. It is a multidimensional and complex aspect of diversity, in accordance with the circulation of ideas and opinions.

The main question about viewpoint diversity, which was posed in the introduction, is from which dimensions viewpoint diversity can be assessed in main news bulletins and to what extent it affects the total news content. This question is a general one and it cannot function on its own. The dimensions of viewpoint diversity that will be examined in this research need to be clarified, namely, it is necessary for the research sub-queries to be defined. Furthermore, the choice of news bulletins as the appropriate genre for the study of viewpoint diversity is highly significant. According to Aslanidou's study (2000), on viewers' activity in relation to news bulletins, television news has the highest percentage of preference among the three information media (television, radio, newspaper). One weakness of this research, however, is the lack of reference to the new information medium, namely news portals. The author (2000) argues with regard to the importance of television news bulletins: "The participation percentage of young people is really high and their attitude towards television news shows that television remains an important information media for them" (p.113). Gilliam and Iyengar (2000) present the crucial role local news plays in the way the audience perceives crime rates. Television news in general plays a significant part in shaping the public agenda and consequently public opinion. However, apart from that, from a methodological point of view, television news is a convenient genre for the study of viewpoint diversity, since it includes many views, ideas and tendencies, which are easily classified and analysed.

To summarize, this research intends to examine the level of diversity of topics and people that appear in the main newscasts of Greek television. Therefore, the principal research question can be formulated as follows: Can a tendency towards diversity be detected in the main newscasts of Greek television, with regard to their coverage and the people who appear in it?

The sub-questions that are examined are as follows:

1. What is the thematic agenda (coverage) of main news bulletins and does this differ among the various channel channels?
2. How is people diversity formed in the main news bulletins and which groups, ideologies or political parties are represented (political, economic, cultural factors; citizenship, etc.)?
3. How much time is spent in each news bulletin on political matters or on statements from political parties (comparative temporal analysis among channels, with regard to the temporal distribution of each party) in comparison to the total duration of the news bulletin?
4. How much time is spent in each news bulletin on social matters or on statements from social/cultural groups (comparative temporal analysis among channels, with regard to the temporal distribution of this type of references) in comparison to the total duration of the news bulletin?
5. Is there any difference regarding the time dedicated to political and non-political topics by news bulletins, before and after the Greek crisis? Has the level of diversity in people and topic coverage increased, decreased or remained relatively unchanged in newscasts during the economic crisis?

For the purposes of this research, the sample of newscasts to be examined was selected from two different television periods. The first, before the Greek crisis, is the period of September 2008 to June 2009 and the second is from September 2011 to June 2012.<sup>42</sup> More specifically,

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<sup>42</sup>The temporal definition of television periods (or seasons) includes every month of the year, apart from the summer months, especially July and August. Within this period, both TV programmes and news coverage are in full development. Moreover, the 'best' months of the season - based on the number of viewers - are considered to be those included in the period from November to March, when, due to winter and bad weather conditions, more people watch television every night. Consequently, during this period channels try to utilize their entertainment and informational programmes, as much as possible.

the sample includes 96 newscasts from the last week of November and the first week of December, for the years 2008 and 2011, and the last week of February and the first week of March, for the years 2009 and 2012. This study, combined with the second one, compares the situation before and during the economic crisis. It should be noted that the economic crisis is employed in this research as a time milestone for the comparison and detection of potential changes in content trends. It is not used as a financial concept and its broader economic implications are not of interest for this thesis; this is the reason why no analysis whatsoever is attempted with regard to this issue.

The television networks under examination are ALPHA (private), ANT1 (private), MEGA (private) and NET (public radio and television). The selection of the television channels is not arbitrary. They were selected with the aim of conducting a comparison between private and public television; this rationale was present in the afore-mentioned methodology of genre analysis. The only difference is that here only one public network is included, whereas in the genre analysis the public network, ET1, is examined as well. In the case of the analysis of content genre, it is of great importance to examine both public networks, since the institutional reason for their parallel operation is basically their differentiated programming. In the case of news bulletins, however, this does not apply because the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) operates similarly across all of its channels.

For the study of the diversity of news bulletins, the archival database of the Audiovisual Media Laboratory of the Faculty of Communication and Mass Media Studies in the University of Athens was used. The archives of this university laboratory include only news bulletins of Greek television and the researcher can track data from up to five or six years in the past. This is the reason why this specific database is used, as it facilitates the collection and organization of the sample.

<b>Serial No</b>	<b>Category</b>
1	Politics (international or internal affairs, issues regarding the President of Greece, the Prime Minister, political parties and political developments)
2	Financial: Production
3	Financial: Trade – consumption
4	Financial: Fiscal matters
5	Cost of living
6	Employment/unemployment
7	Social security, retirement provisions, welfare
8	Health
9	Public administration, public services
10	Church, religion
11	Education
12	Media
13	Arts – culture
14	Showbiz
15	Science
16	Environment
17	Family matters
18	Legal and judicial issues
19	Crimes and other offences
20	Defence - weaponry/army equipment
21	Sports



Serial No	Category
22	Police issues
23	Public transport – road infrastructure
24	Issues of humanitarian interest
25	Warfare
26	Natural disasters/weather conditions
27	Tourism
28	Other

Table 4. 3: In this table, the categorizations used for the study of viewpoint diversity are illustrated. These categorizations refer specifically to the genres of journalistic coverage (source: University Research Institute of Applied Communication, 2012).

Content analysis converts qualitative material into quantitative data. In brief, it can be defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of the features of certain messages (Neuendorf, 2002). As a method, it has mostly been associated with the analysis of written and spoken discourse in the context of mass media; it can, however, be applied to every type of communication discourse or message, in any form that it may appear (Berelson, 1952). It is a systematically reproducible technique of “compression - conversion” of the number of words in a text into fewer content categories, which are based on specific rules of codification (Stemler, 2001). In this way, the researchers can study large amounts of data using a systematic methodology. The potential for applying content analysis to a wide variety of texts (the term text is not used in its typical sense, but includes audiovisual material as well, as is the case in this research) makes this a highly useful research method (Budd, Thorp, et al., 1967).

The systematic examination of the text (audiovisual material) is the primary aim of content analysis. Therefore, the text is studied as a whole, the categories used for the classification of data are explicitly defined, in order for other researchers to be able to repeat and verify the process, and the features of the text are quantified so their significance can be established,

with regard to the text they appear in, but also in comparison to other texts. Research studies that use this method focus on the basic topics covered by the text, in this case, newscasts coverage, on their comparative significance (in order for the degree of diversity to be confirmed), on the time and space dedicated to each topic and on other content features that are relevant to the main question and hypotheses of the given study (Berelson, 1971).

The above describes a method for the systematic codification and quantification of written and spoken discourse, which is studied using tools of statistical analysis. By statistically processing the data, new statistical correlations are discovered that verify the theoretical hypotheses of the research or new theoretical accounts emerge (Kyriazis, 2001).

Once a decision has been made regarding the main research question, the working hypotheses and the data that the research will utilize - based on progressive theory and other approaches that were previously discussed - the basic data unit (analysis unit) is defined, that is, the section of the text that will constitute the basis for the categorization: Word, sentence, paragraph, subject, person or the whole text (the article, book, film, radio or television programme, etc.).

Categorization is the primary feature of content analysis, since it constitutes the process of data codification. This is the reason why the categories according to which the text of the research will be codified should serve the purposes of the research, be explicit and mutually exclusive so that the text under examination can be unambiguously codified, without the risk of misinterpretations, and exhaustive, that is, all the data should fall under a category (Berelson, 1952; Stemler, 2001).

Content analysis has also some potential limitations, which could undermine the scientific quality and objectivity of the findings: If the categories of analysis are inadequately defined and are non-mutually exclusive and exhaustive, for every possible case, then this can lead the researchers into making codification errors regarding the texts under examination and consequently in presenting incorrect results. For instance, if the researcher classifies talk shows and newscasts in the same category, this may result in an incomplete mapping, especially with regard to viewpoint diversity. The case of viewpoint diversity has some methodological particularities in comparison to content/ genre diversity or source diversity, which are approached more conventionally. On the contrary, the case of viewpoint diversity entails other factors as well, such as which person expresses an opinion, whom it represents,

how often this opinion or the persons expressing it appear in a channel's programming and even more complex factors, such as, whether the same piece of news that is broadcast from two different channels has a different viewpoint and how this can be approached methodologically, namely which variables it should be based on. These issues are discussed in the sixth chapter.

#### **4.4. Analysis of the production market (source diversity)**

This study of source diversity aims to describe the field of television programming production in Greek television, approaching a series of questions, such as: How many production companies cooperate with television networks? What is this proportion in relation to in-house productions? Can the existence or non-existence of a vertical concentration between television channels and production companies be demonstrated? What role do independent producers play? Do particular production companies predominate in terms of television audience measurement?

These research questions are framed by particular cases which deal with issues that result from the theoretical approach of the question examined. According to the theory presented in the first chapter, the domestic production of television programming does not always lead to diversity, as there should be a vertical concentration in the field of production and some specific production companies could score highly on television audience ratings. Following the previous hypothesis, when dealing with production companies that follow the logic of vertical concentration, it is expected that the relevance of ownership should also be "confirmed" by strict cooperation when it comes to broadcasting the programmes produced. Programmes made by a particular company should be broadcast by the channel(s) to which the company is linked through an ownership relation. At the same time, many production companies specialize in specific types of programmes and (in some countries) there is a tendency for international co-productions to be carried out, to improve strategic and financial coalitions. There is a reduction of television audience rating for programmes which possess a cultural character while, finally, the experience gained by international examples has shown that in many cases the "Television without Frontiers" Directive can be applied when dealing with the minimum quota of programmes produced by independent producers. Finally, according to data from AGB, it is expected that high television audience ratings (from about 9:00 to 11:00 in the case of Greece) will witness the most expensive productions (fiction,

comedies, drama and documentaries) being broadcast. This tendency, however, is found in the evening zone as well, which has lower viewer ratings.

The analysis resulting from this study will help answer certain key questions related to diversity, pluralism and concentration (diagonal or vertical in the field of media), the role and power of independent producers (which is one of the most fundamental principles set by the EU), the predomination of specific types of programmes, the degree of cooperation between channels owing to an important number of production companies as well as the level of cooperation a production company maintains with other television networks. Other key areas explored by this research include the specialization of production companies in specific programming genres and, naturally, the power that some production companies may acquire because of the number of programmes they produce or because of the television audience ratings they score.

#### **4.5. Description of the study**

##### **4.5.1. Data collection**

To conduct this study, a quantitative description of the programmes broadcast was selected, from an ensemble of channels operating on a national level, and particularly the public television networks ET1, NET and ET3 and the private television networks MEGA, ANT1, ALPHA, ALTER, STAR and SKY. The selection of the channels was based upon the desire to demonstrate a contrast between public and private television, and upon the national television audience rates of the channels. In order for the highest number of programmes possible to be part of the research,<sup>43</sup> the description covers two different periods across the 2008-9 television season. The first covers the last week of November and the first week of December (24.11-7.12.2008) and the second the period from the last week of February to the first week of March of 2009 (23.2- 8.3.2009). A programming total for the four-week period was selected. These periods are widely representative of Greek television, as after September and, particularly at the end of the month, the new television season begins and consequently in November the new television landscape shows whether a new programming has been

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<sup>43</sup>This reference has to do with the fact that it is a common practice for Greek television networks to change a part of their programmes during the television season for several reasons, such as if some programmes have low audience ratings or a high cost of production. It may be because a series was designed to be of a short duration and it is usually replaced by a new one. The selection of the two periods mentioned above is not occasional, but the authors believe that they fulfil some basic conditions. First, the first of the two periods is situated at the beginning of the television season and it is very unlikely that a series would have been competed or “removed” from a television network by this point. Regarding the second of the two periods, the selection has to do with the fact that the television networks start broadcasting new episodes instead of repeating earlier ones, something they usually do after the 1st of the New Year. At the same time, if a new series is going to be broadcast, then this series will have already been included in the schedule.

successful with regard to television audience rates. In addition, in February there were some modifications to the programme. These involved some programmes having their time and space possible so they would attain higher audience levels. It should also be pointed out that the summer months and particularly from mid-July to mid-September are relatively “dead”, as programmes are mainly repeats.

The programmes selected were broadcasted during the prime-time zone, from 18.00 to midnight. For the sake of clarity, it should be mentioned that the selection includes programmes starting before 18.00 in the afternoon that end after that time, as well as programmes starting at 00.00 and ending later. It is also worth here explaining more about the prime-time zone. As indicated by several books and a number of studies<sup>44</sup> (Futch, Lismanf and Geller, 1984), the time-length of this particular zone may vary depending upon the researcher and the data in the study, as well as upon the country selected, since audiences in different countries have different television habits. Consequently, for this study, the period between 18.00 and 00.00 is defined as the prime-time zone.

The choice of this particular selection of programmes is based both upon the goals of this study – to study the programming produced instead of a mere description of television audience ratings – and upon the fact that in most cases the television networks, during that particular period and afterwards, broadcast new programmes, most of which are external productions and not repetitions or in-house productions. Philip Napoli supports the opinion that the prime-time zone is important, because during that period television audience rates are higher than those during other zones and, besides, that is why the policy makers select this period as a representative sample to study television flow in general (Napoli, pers. Comm., 2009). On the other hand, Napoli expresses his doubts about the particular volume of programming types broadcast during the prime-time zone, as this means that some programming types broadcast outside this zone are not included in the research field (Napoli, pers. Comm., 2009). The methodological issue of the selection of the zones and the time periods selected in general by the researchers, or by policymakers, to be used as a representative sample in several theses or studies is significant, because this is an issue which directly influences the results and the measurement of television in general, regardless of whether it has to do with the degree of diversity or television audience indicators. This

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<sup>44</sup>DeTardo-Bora (2009), Kaye and Sapolsky (2004), Signorielli (2000), Wilson et al. (1999). Signorelli (2000): In this study, the prime-time borders are defined as 8-11 p.m. every day (from Monday to Saturday) and on Sunday 7-11p.m., a definition that applies to the American television and is widely used by the US television industry. Wilson et al. (1999) define the interval between 7 and 10:30p.m. as the prime-time zone in television in New Zealand.

question and the methodological issues of approaching diversity will be dealt with in the final chapter's concluding remarks.

The analysis of programmes within this study excludes in-house productions (although later there will be a brief comparison between the total number of in-house production programmes and external ones), foreign programmes that have been imported from abroad and were not co-productions or produced with the help of a contribution from a Greek production company, programmes broadcast as repetitions and advertisements.

There are two reasons why the research was repeated in 2012. Following the above-mentioned approach, the research queries and the hypotheses of the previous research, this new study aims to map television programming production during a crisis period, both as an individual matter and, primarily, in comparison with the situation before the crisis. In this way, any significant effect of the economic crisis on the production of prime-time programmes can be detected. Apart from that, the trends that exist today can be detected, so that it can be clarified whether market trends do indeed affect the development of content diversity. This research quantitatively records programmes that were broadcast by national television channels, in particular by the public channels ET1, NET and ET3 and by the private networks MEGA, ANT1, ALPHA, STAR and SKAI.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, the research questions and working hypothesis are formed on a comparative basis, aiming to illustrate any potential differences in the field of television production during the economic crisis.

The time period for recording the programmes broadcast is from 11 to 25 November 2012 for the repeat study. As previously mentioned, the particularities of television clearly affect the selection of the time periods to be examined. November was selected in this case for the same reason as before, because during this period there are no alterations in the programme, therefore, it can be studied without scheduling changes. During these two weeks, programmes from every channel were recorded. The research was concerned with prime-time programmes, from 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. In other words, the same time zone as in the first research is studied and under the same selection criteria, as previously explained.

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<sup>45</sup>In the previous research conducted in 2008-2009, there were nine channels, given that ALTER was still operating. So far, ALTER is the only channel that has stopped broadcasting, stopping in 2011, as a consequence of the economic crisis.

In this case, the research questions are outlined by certain working hypotheses, which stem from the theoretical review of the subject-matter and the comparative rationale of this research:

1. The economic crisis is expected to have adversely affected both domestic production and the broadcasting of foreign productions, due to financial difficulties faced by the channels.
2. According to the discussion in the fifth chapter, domestic programming production does not necessarily lead to diversity, since there could be a vertical concentration in the field of production and a high ratings concentration associated with certain big production companies. This situation is expected to have intensified due to the recession caused by the crisis.
3. Following on from the above hypothesis, with regard to the production companies that fall under the logic of vertical concentration, it is expected that the ownership-production connection will be confirmed by close collaboration in the broadcasting of programmes. In other words, the shows produced by a company will mainly be broadcast by the channel(s) which has an ownership relation to this company. This practice of collaboration is expected to have intensified as well, due to the difficult economic conditions caused by the crisis.
4. Moreover, because of the unfavourable economic situation, the percentage of external productions is expected to have decreased in comparison with in-house productions. This is viewed in contrast to the pre-crisis ratio.
5. In addition, it is accepted that production companies specialize in specific programming types.
6. It is also accepted that the ratings of culture shows have decreased.
7. International experience has shown that in many cases the “Television without Frontiers” directive is followed, with regard to the minimum programming production quotas for independent producers.
8. Finally, it is expected that the prime-time zone (from approximately 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the case of Greece) will include the most expensive productions (fiction series, comedies, dramas and documentaries).

In the eighth chapter, the findings of the second study are discussed in relation to these working hypotheses.

#### 4.5.2. Classification and typology issues

In order to provide a detailed description of the data used in the research, a series of variables were developed, such as the titles of programmes, the channel that broadcasts the programmes, the production company, the time the programmes start, the programmes' duration, the programmes' genres – according to the typology presented at the end of this chapter – and, finally, the television audience rates that a specific programming scores in comparison to other programmes broadcast at the same time (something the AGB Television Audience Measurement Company also calls television audience share).<sup>46</sup> Each programming was recorded once, as the study's aim was not to record their volume (in hours), but rather their number and diversity with regard to choices made by the production companies.

As with the case of defining the prime-time zone and designating programming genres, there is no commonly acceptable typology that could be applied universally to television in every single country, an opinion I discussed in the fourth chapter. As mentioned, the definition of the categories of programmes should be based on the needs of the specific study, as well as the particularities of the television programming in the country in question.<sup>47</sup> For my study, I classified programmes into two different categories – general and specific<sup>48</sup> (see Figures 12 and 13). The first, which largely follows general classification techniques found in studies conducted abroad, consists of the three following programming categories:

A) Information

B) Entertainment

C) Culture

This second, more specific category, which is adapted to the conditions in Greece, and based upon the database provided by AGB Hellas, consists of:

a) Information

b) Comedies – Satirical programmes

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<sup>46</sup>AGB calculates the television audience share (A.S.) by dividing the average number of viewers per minute that have watched a programme by the average number of total television viewers per minute throughout the duration of that specific programme, and then multiplying it by 100. It is expressed as a percentage and is also called television-share. It indicates how competitive that specific programme was against other programmes broadcast during the same period. AGB Nielsen.

<sup>47</sup>Characteristics of the definitions of the programmes' genres which differ from country to country are the tables provided by Medina M. (2004).

<sup>48</sup>A similar classification of the programmes' genres on two levels (general and specific) is also suggested by Bienvenido Leon (2007) and by Koukoutsaki (2003).



c) Drama – Reality

d) Light entertainment

e) Documentaries

f) Culture

According to the classification technique used here, the first group of programmes, information, belongs to the first general category; that of general information programmes. The three programming groups that follow (comedies-satirical, drama-reality and light entertainment) belong to the second general category, entertainment programmes, and, finally, the two last groups belong to the category of culture.

In the following subchapter, the importance of personal interviews and correspondence, which took place during the preparation of this thesis, will be discussed.

#### **4.6. The context of the interviews**

The empirical findings of this research, besides from the analysis that follows in the next chapters, are also based on a series of interviews and discussions with experts in this field, who significantly supported and facilitated this research with their analyses and clarifications. The interviews are essentially divided into two types. Firstly, there are the interviews with academics, who have either addressed content diversity or have dealt with similar matters, such as content categorization. The second group concerns executives in the Greek television market, and more specifically of newscasts of big television channels, who could analyse the development of journalistic content from their own experience. It should be noted that the interviews were not strictly structured in the form of questions; they were more of an open discussion and exchange of opinions. This is the reason why they did not take place once, but rather the communication was constant. This helped the research remain updated and allowed it to be regularly enriched with new opinions and ideas, which was highly useful, since diversity by its nature is an issue that transforms and develops constantly.

With respect to the academics who approached content diversity, the first interview took place with Philip Napoli. The questions were focused on the selection of the components that constitute his approach, as well as on their application to other countries or on their possible

limitations, regarding their measuring potential. In particular, the questions posed to Napoli were the following:

- What are the criteria that make you think that these components that form the ‘diversity principle’ – meaning source, content and exposure diversity – are the most essential? Why do you think that these components ‘have the greatest relevance to communications policymakers?’
- What is the audience (readers) of your model referring to the ‘Diversity Principle’?
- How is this model (‘diversity principle’) applied in other countries and what are the criteria for its application?
- ‘Workforce diversity’ is a component derived from the legislation and the guidelines of the Federal Communication Commission, as a policy against exclusion and marginalization. How does this component affect the final programming output since it is a policy which concerns the workplace?
- Are there any other components / subcomponents - not mentioned in your research - that you could suggest for source diversity?
- Is source diversity as measurable a concept as ‘exposure diversity’? If yes, how could we measure and classify source diversity? How could we associate the results of the measurement of source diversity with those of exposure diversity?

This interview was followed by further discussion with Napoli of related issues, such as institutional diversity, an issue that he brought up and suggested should be part of this study.

A second interview was held with Andrew Stirling, regarding his approach. In this interview, Stirling’s reference to the concept of “balance” was emphasized and the assessment of balance between the three components that comprise his approach, namely diversity, variety and disparity, was discussed. There was also a question regarding whether his approach could be applied to the study of television content. For the interviews about content categorization, William Adams was one of the interviewees and the discussion concerned genre typology, which is how genres are classified, on which criteria they are based and how applicable these criteria are. William Adams explained his approach to programming categorization; however, due to the fact that his model was based on the American standards, there were no common

points of reference. Nonetheless, some theoretical approaches were deemed useful and incorporated in this research. The author also spoke with Susan Eastman, who focused on television programming practices and strategies. More specifically, Eastman referred primarily to the variables she employed in her research to study television content, and she sent her own approaches and methodologies. Therefore, Eastman contributed mostly with empirical comments on the distinction between policy and business approaches to content, an issue that was discussed in the previous chapters. Finally, a broader discussion regarding content, took place with Stylianos Papathanassopoulos and more specifically regarding the use of terms, such as television programming or programming development strategies.

The second group of interviews, which was with executives operating in the market, includes a discussion with the CEO of AGB, Sophocles Makrides. The discussion revolved around the ways AGB categorizes television programmes, both by time zones and genres. In addition, the company's plans for the future development of the methodology of categorization, in order to cope with the new technological needs of the market, were mentioned. Furthermore, the relationship between companies that measure television audiences and television channels was analysed, as well as the manner in which this relationship affects the categorization of programming.

With regard to television newscasts, there was a discussion with three editors of main newscasts, the chief editor at ANT1, Lefkos Christou, the chief editor at MEGA, Pavlos Milonas and Michalis Psilos, collaborator at ANT1 news and chief editor of the internet newscast at the Athens News Agency. The selection of the topics presented was discussed as was the way the newscasts differed from their respective competitors. How content was selected was analysed; not only with regard to topics, but also to people that participate in the news, representing a group or expressing an opinion. This discussion was particularly useful for the analysis of viewpoint diversity, since the role and function of television newscasts were considered.

#### **4.7. Further methodological considerations**

In order for the methodological approach to be successful, it needs to be applicable, in particular to the Greek case, which is examined in this thesis. As discussed in the introduction, one of the basic points of this research is the compatibility of the methodology with the application of content diversity. This is the reason why the programming

categorization was based on the Greek standards, adopted also by AGB Hellas. Even though AGB tries to follow common categorization formulae for different countries, the application of this specific methodology in another country would probably require some alterations, not particularly with regard to genres or general categories, but mainly, with regard to the temporal distribution, namely time zones, since audience's habits are different in each country.

Within the broader concept of genre diversity, the ratio of domestic to foreign productions is studied. This is mentioned here to illustrate the process of developing a study framework, which will be compatible with the market – and its typical features – to which is applied. The particularities of small nations and the role of institutional diversity were analysed in the second chapter. This specific example of the ratio of domestic to foreign productions could be less interesting if we were dealing with another country. However, in the case of Greece, where language limitations do not allow for television content to be exported, it is particularly interesting to examine the extent to which foreign productions are assimilated in programme diversity.

Applying the methodology for the assessment of the degree of viewpoint diversity is an especially complex situation. In the sixth chapter, the particularities of this situation are mentioned. Firstly, in order for viewpoint to be incorporated within the broader concept of diversity, it needs to be considered as part of content and not an independent factor. Moreover, the fact that viewpoint diversity is assessed mainly through newscasts and informational shows raises the question as to whether the structure of these shows differs from country to country. A typical news bulletin in Greece, for instance, shows a great number of people expressing their view on various matters, which usually leads to a debate on-air between people who support different opinions. Therefore, in the case of Greece it is easy to talk about people diversity in the news. In other countries, this could be less straightforward, despite the fact that an opinion could be indirectly expressed, for example by the anchormen or through the topics they present. It should be stressed that studying the diversity of news coverage does not imply by itself that viewpoint diversity will also be studied. In this case, this would be the study of the degree of diversity of news topics. This is the reason why the wide range of topics does not indicate the existence of opinions, at least when the topics are objectively presented. On the other hand, studying the content of topics still remains a significant issue, since it helps the researchers identify the areas on which

public opinion is focused. In addition, the live debates are based on the topics presented in the news; consequently, there is a connection between news coverage and the people who represent certain groups or political parties.

Finally, with regard to source diversity, the market structures of each country should be taken into consideration, so as to partially redevelop the research questions. However, the most important point with respect to source diversity methodology and its application lies in an issue raised by Taberner and Carvajal (2002): “Concentration can be analysed from the market viewpoint or from the perspective of the companies. In the first case, concentration increases when the position of dominance or influence of the main companies becomes stronger, the public’s power of choice is reduced and when some ‘independent voices’ disappear. From the business point of view, concentration implies industrial growth of the communications groups” (p.15). Therefore, when approaching source diversity, a researcher should define the perspective of his or her study and interpretation and, prior to that, he or she should have clarified certain issues. For instance, when the production companies’ power of influence is mentioned, a basic element in this research, its meaning should have previously been clarified, because this could refer to many different things. It could indicate, for example, the number of channels collaborating with a production company or the amount of productions this company creates annually or even – which is what this thesis is concerned with – the ratings percentages that the productions of a given company attain.

In the next four chapters, the methodology laid out above is applied to Greek television.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: TRENDS IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF GENRES IN GREEK TELEVISION**

The examination of genre distribution within the programming structure is one of the most crucial issues in the broader study of content diversity. Genres constitute the core element of content diversity, since the final degree of content diversity is determined by the extent to which each genre is promoted in the programme.

### **5.1 Empirical analysis of genre distribution**

Up to now, no extensive empirical research has been conducted on trends in Greek television, whether at the production level, at the level of the quantitative distribution of genres or with regard to viewpoint diversity.

In this chapter, the structure of the Greek televisual programming, its typology and the specific features that constitute it are analysed using empirical measurements, while in the methodology chapter (four), the research questions regarding the genre analysis of the programming are discussed at length.

Before starting the analysis of the empirical data of this thesis, Koukoutsaki's research (2003), regarding the programming of Greek television should be mentioned, in order to comparatively analyse both studies at the end. Koukoutsaki's study of Greek television series focuses on the production strategies followed by TV channels, analysing these both quantitatively, by using material dating from 1970 to 1997, and qualitatively, by using interviews with professionals within Greek television. The author claims that the year 1970 is a cornerstone, since that is when the first Greek television drama appeared. The author mentions that there was some difficulty collecting data from various archives before 1997, due to the lack of an organized database of televisual material. This study was conducted by concentrating the classifications of Greek television series into four basic categories: General drama,<sup>49</sup> soap operas, comedy and adventure. According to Koukoutsaki, the basis of the research study is the classification and notional interpretation of genres. Classifying these into these four categories is the result of a combination of classifications that were used in Greece by different public or private entities such as AGB Hellas (the Greek company which specializes in television audience ratings), the Association of Greek Film Directors and

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<sup>49</sup>The general drama, as pointed out by Koukoutsaki, involves a variety of different programmes with social, historical or romantic aspects where the common feature is the development of the main character instead of action.

Metrix S.A. A significant point in Koukoutsaki's study – which is relevant to certain issues in this research, analysed in the methodology chapter – is the definitions of concepts concerning programming categorization according to genres. The author discusses the matter as follows: “The first methodological problem that emerged concerned definitions of genres. Both the terms ‘drama’ and ‘fiction’ are abundantly used today in different contexts, from television news to theatre or literature, and there seems to be no clear common definition for either. However, for the purposes of this study, ‘drama’ and ‘fiction’ are used as synonyms in order to describe screenplay based television programmes structured in more than two episodes, produced in Greece by Greek companies and screened on Greek television channels (p.718).

As far as public television is concerned, Koukoutsaki looks at the years of the military junta in detail; during that time, the majority of programmes were entertaining but “neutral”, so as to promote the dogma of the dictators: “Nation, Religion, Family”. Therefore, as far as the Greek case is concerned, the homogeneity of television content is a complex phenomenon that existed before the appearance of private television. Koukoutsaki mentions for instance the homogeneous “neutral” programmes broadcast in 1973 in Greece, during the dictatorship period. Koukoutsaki associates the entertainment genres with the programming of public television during the dictatorship, arguing that: “The significance of these programmes within the context of the dictatorship is therefore apparent: they were ideological products of military propaganda aiming at the nation's conciliation with the army” (p.724).

According to Koukoutsaki, the most expensive productions were general dramas and adventure dramas (2003, p.724). The production of low budget soap operas and comedies is connected to the advent of private television. The following table illustrates the increase of television series, both in terms of quantity as well as in terms of genre production, after the arrival of private television (from approximately 15 hours maximum up to 65 hours per week maximum, representing an increase of approximately 433%). Specifically, this development is due to the appearance of soap operas and the expansion of comedies over the period 1990-1997. Koukoutsaki points to evident signs of Americanization and homogenization in these two kinds of television series.

As far as soap operas are concerned, and the potential homogeneity that they may bring to Greek television programming, in a related study, Liebes and Livingstone (1998) observe that domestic soap operas in Greece, as well as in another four European countries, do not follow an unsophisticated American model. However, Papathanassopoulos – as mentioned in the

previous chapters – thinks the opposite, arguing that Greek Television uses American policies in order to attract viewers, but not the American form or nature of content. As regards Greek soap operas, “The Brightness” (in Greek: *Lampsi*) and “Goodmorning Life” (in Greek: *Kalimera zoi*) for instance, generally support Tomlinson’s views regarding the productive exchange and preservation of the national character of each country during the process of globalization. Tomlinson, referring to the concept of ‘deterritorialization’ in relation to globalization, argues that: “What this idea implies is not that globalization destroys localities – as for example, in the crude homogenization thesis, everywhere becoming blandly traditional ‘anchoring’ in particular localities” (2003, p.273). In order to practically comprehend this view, Liebes and Livingstone (1998) present three types of features that soap operas in various countries can contain, along with their own specific and local features. More specifically, Liebes and Livingstone mention the following forms of soap operas: a) Dynastic – a model pertaining to the power of family, family relationships and values, such as marriage, b) Community – a form that presents a more casual state of the family, usually middle and working class, or involves people that share the same social status or live in the same neighbourhood and c) Dyadic – this model concerns the relationships of young people, mostly couples, where the plot is based on the development of the relationship and it demonstrates the typical features of a romance.

These models, suggested by Liebes and Livingstone, are of particular importance, since they demonstrate the process by which a global product from a different country, in this case a soap opera, can be integrated into a channel’s schedule, with a different language and culture. Moreover, they show how a soap opera, which may for instance be written for Greek television, shares common features with regard to its form with a foreign production of the same type.

By producing and broadcasting soap operas and comedies, the producers sought to attain the highest possible viewing figures whilst making programmes as cheaply as possible. The production cost of these programmes was much lower compared to the other series, thus leading to their rapid expansion. The comparative information provided by Koukoutsaki is presented in the following table:



<b>Production cost of a television series</b> <b>(drachmas per episode)</b>	
<b>General Drama</b>	4-7min 1991-2, 14-18m in 1996-7
<b>Soap Opera</b>	2.5m in 1992-3
<b>Comedy</b>	3-4m in 1991-2, 6-8m in 1996-7
<b>Adventure &amp; Crime Drama</b>	4-6m in 1991-2, 14-18m in 1996-7

Table 5. 1: This table presents the data provided by Koukoutsaki regarding the production costs of television series (general drama, soap opera, comedy, adventure & crime drama) during the periods 1991-2, 1992-3 and 1996-7. The comparison to these periods is not of particular importance. Nonetheless, these data are presented here to illustrate the methodology adopted by Koukoutsaki's research (2003) and the conclusions that she draws.

According to Koukoutsaki, repeats or reruns of television series are proof of programming homogenization in Greek television. The issue of reruns of television series appears below in the data of this empirical research as well. The following table shows quantitative data regarding the impressive increase of repeats or reruns of television series over the period 1990-1997, which is the last period included in her study. As far as the periods from 1970 to 1990 are concerned, repeats or reruns of television series are low; as for the period of deregulation, the repeats or reruns of television series have an almost equal share of broadcasting hours per week as TV premieres, therefore showing signs of homogeneity.

Consequently, the general conclusions from the study by Koukoutsaki are that television as a whole in Greece was homogeneous, even where there was no competition, with programmes seeking to impart ideological guidance to the people. Following the advent of private television, soap operas and comedies became very popular and represented the ideal programming for prime-time viewers, complying with the mercantile spirit of private television which wished to attract the maximum audience by investing the minimum amount of money. So, most schedules were filled with cheap productions following the American formula yet reflecting Greek culture.

## 5.2 Analysis of research data.

The research in this study firstly examines the programming of private and public television channels over the periods 2004-2006. Specifically, the programmes were analysed according to their category,<sup>50</sup> type,<sup>51</sup> broadcasting mode (programmes premiering on TV/repeats or reruns of programmes) and if these programmes were Greek or foreign productions. The results, as well as the data provided by AGB Hellas, set out a full picture of contemporary Greek television.

The first data from the research regarding programming categories show that in private television there is an overwhelming concentration of television products from specific categories such as information programmes, TV series and entertainment TV shows. Public service broadcasters record significant viewing figures in these categories, as well as in kids'/teens' shows, but they record stable viewing figures in all categories, even in educational and cultural programmes, where private television broadcasters record viewing figures approaching zero. Thus, the general picture from these data is that Greek private television broadcasters largely broadcast homogeneous programmes, while public service broadcasters have a wider range of distribution, covering all the categories of television programmes.

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<sup>50</sup>The programme categories are as follows: Information Television Shows/News, Other Information Television Shows or Journalistic TV Programmes, Entertainment Television Shows, Arts and Culture Television Shows, Educational Television Shows, Sports Television Shows, Kids' Shows and Teens' Shows, TV Series, Films, Documentaries and other programmes (such as telemarketing TV shows).

<sup>51</sup>The types of programmes are as follows: Information or journalistic shows or programmes, Information journalistic research programmes, TV shows of general appeal covering a wider spectrum of topics, Information talk or panel shows, Shows on human interest stories, Light infotainment shows, Educational and instructional TV shows, Specialized TV shows, Personality-oriented shows (interviews/portraits), Entertainment TV shows, Arts and culture TV shows/programmes covering and promoting arts, letters and cultural heritage, Sports shows/sporting events live or recorded broadcasts, Religious programming/broadcasts of religious services, Kids' shows and teens' shows, News bulletins, Game shows, Reality shows, TV series, Films, Documentaries and other programmes (such as telemarketing shows).

TELEVISION PROGRAMMING CATEGORIES	Private Television Broadcasters			Public Service Broadcasters		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Informative Television Shows/News	31.4%	33.4%	32.1%	23.3%	25.5%	27.3%
Other Informative Television Show or Journalistic TV Programmes	2.4%	4.9%	5.2%	6.3%	8.7%	13.1%
Entertainment	17.5%	12.0%	20.2%	3.0%	6.5%	6.1%
Culture/Arts	0.2%	-	-	10.7%	5.3%	5.7%
Educational Television Shows	-	-	-	5.2%	1.1%	0.4%
Sports Shows	1.2%	2.0%	1.3%	2.6%	4.6%	7.8%
Kids'/Teens' shows	0.5%	2.2%	-	11.1%	22.8%	16.3%
TV series	32.2%	32.2%	27.5%	11.1%	9.5%	5.7%
Films	8.5%	6.8%	7.8%	7.0%	5.3%	5.3%
Documentaries	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	18.5%	9.1%	9.4%
Other TV shows	6.1%	6.1%	5.7%	1.1%	1.5%	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5. 2: This table shows the figures for programming categories in private and public television, respectively.

With respect to the types of programmes transmitted by private and public television broadcasters in general, news bulletins and TV series are the only programmes that record two-digit viewing figures, reaching over 20% in some cases. Therefore, the picture that

emerges from the Greek television programmes is that of homogeneity. In fact, news bulletins that use the so-called split-screen and low budget series (analysed in detail by A. Koukoutsaki) are among the least expensive ways of filling up airtime. So, in a competitive environment, the strategy followed by the Greek channels was that of the structural theory, which involves the broadcasting of cheap television programmes which seek to attract the largest possible audience.

<b>TYPES OF TELEVISION PROGRAMME</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Information or journalistic shows or programmes	7.9%	8.6%	<b>7.1%</b>
Information journalistic research programmes	0.4%	0.9%	<b>1.0%</b>
TV shows of general appeal covering a wide spectrum of topics	2.0%	3.7%	<b>4.6%</b>
Informative talk or panel shows	1.0%	1.6%	<b>1.4%</b>
Shows on human interest stories	-	0.7%	-
Light infotainment shows	0.9%	2.2%	<b>2.4%</b>
Educational and instructional TV shows	2.0%	0.4%	<b>0.2%</b>
Specialized TV shows	1.0%	1.2%	<b>2.5%</b>
Personality-oriented shows (interviews/portraits)	0.9%	0.7%	<b>1.1%</b>
Entertainment TV shows	5.5%	5.5%	<b>5.9%</b>
Arts and Culture TV shows/programmes covering and promoting arts, literature and cultural heritage	4.2%	2.1%	<b>2.2%</b>
Sports shows/sporting events live or recorded broadcasts	1.7%	3.1%	<b>3.8%</b>
Religious programming/broadcasts of religious services	0.3%	0.3%	<b>0.3%</b>

<b>TYPES OF TELEVISION PROGRAMME</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Kids' shows / Teens' shows	4.6%	10.2%	<b>6.3%</b>
News bulletins	18.9%	19.1%	<b>20.8%</b>
Game Shows	2.5%	1.0%	<b>5.1%</b>
Reality shows	3.0%	1.0%	<b>1.4%</b>
TV series	24.0%	23.3%	<b>19.0%</b>
Films	7.9%	6.2%	<b>6.8%</b>
Documentaries	7.2%	3.9%	<b>3.8%</b>
Other TV shows	3.9%	4.0%	<b>4.3 %</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5. 3: Total and gross figures for programming types for 2004, 2005 and 2006. The classification of the programme was based on AGB Hellas' classification. In this case the audiovisual laboratory of Athens' classification was also used.

According to AGB Hellas' data regarding the same time period, 2004-2006,<sup>52</sup> information TV programmes, TV series and films prevailed. Nevertheless, by examining each channel, certain exceptions may be found as, for instance, viewing ratings of 10% were recorded for ET1 (Hellenic Television 1) for kids' shows and sports TV shows. However, the fact that over 50% of the total viewing share was recorded for ET1 through its news bulletins leads to the conclusion that public television does provide homogeneous television products. There are certain differences among private television channels due to their strategies (since 25-30% of the programming of ANT1 and 10-15% of the programming of ALPHA consist of

<sup>52</sup>See: AGB Hellas, *TV Yearbook* 2003-2004, Athens, 2004; AGB Hellas, *TV Yearbook* 2004-2005, Athens, 2005; AGB Hellas, *TV Yearbook* 2005-2006, Athens, 2006.

TV series); however, in general terms, the picture is homogeneous, even though public broadcasters have problems with their productions and rely on the broadcasting of sporting events and football matches, as well as on documentaries.

% of transmission time		TELEVISION CHANNELS							
TYPES	TV SEASON	ALPHA	ALTER	ANT1	MEGA	STAR	ET1	NET	ET3
TV Series	'02-'03 <sup>53</sup>	10.0	6.7	27.2	16.9	15.6	14.9	0.2	2.7
	'03-'04	14.7	4.3	26.2	25.6	12.7	0.7	8.2	1.5
	'04-'05 <sup>54</sup>	15.6	7.5	30.0	32.1	20.5	3.0	11.4	1.3
	'05-'06	14.2	10.3	25.8	35.5	19.4	5.3	7.1	5.4
Movie Films	'02-'03	13.2	26.9	15.5	17.8	28.2	9.3	5.7	6.6
	'03-'04	12.7	20.4	14.5	15.6	30.5	6.3	10.0	5.7
	'04-'05	16.3	23.4	13.5	18.1	29.0	7.8	11.6	5.2
	'05-'06	9.8	24.8	12.6	16.6	32.3	7.1	8.3	5.9
Light Entertainment Shows	'02-'03	2.8	11.7	10.2	9.7	7.0	3.0	0.9	0.1
	'03-'04	4.6	14.0	12.2	12.0	7.0	0.4	1.9	0.2
	'04-'05	6.6	7.2	6.2	6.7	2.6	0.2	0.3	0.3
	'05-'06	8.9	8.8	7.5	3.1	1.8	1.3	2.7	1.6

<sup>53</sup>These data are for the period from 30-9-2002 to 30-6-2003 (TV season 2002-2003) and from 22-9-2003 to 4-7-2004 (TV season 2003-2004). As regards ET3 (Greek Television 3), the data for the TV season 2002-2003 refer to the time period from the 3rd February to 30th June.

<sup>54</sup>These data are for the time period from 1 September to 31 August annually.

% of transmission time		TELEVISION CHANNELS							
TYPES	TV SEASON	ALPHA	ALTER	ANT1	MEGA	STAR	ET1	NET	ET3
Arts & Culture TV Programmes	'02-'03	1.1	3.9	1.3	1.3	0.3	5.6	5.9	11.0
	'03-'04	1.7	2.1	1.8	1.1	0.3	10.4	2.6	9.5
	'04-'05	1.3	0.5	0.8	1.1	0.3	11.5	4.4	10.8
	'05-'06	0.7	3.7	1.9	1.7	0.2	8.8	3.7	8.3
Newscasts/ Reporting	'02-'03	62.0	34.5	38.0	44.9	33.6	38.4	84.7	63.7
	'03-'04	59.5	41.7	39.6	40.1	37.5	55.9	67.0	64.0
	'04-'05	52.2	43.1	42.0	36.4	31.2	50.2	63.9	64.2
	'05-'06	60.2	38.8	43.1	36.6	31.3	54.6	58.9	58.8
Kids' Programmes	'02-'03	1.1	13.5	3.8	3.8	12.5	16.2	0.2	3.0
	'03-'04	0.0	15.6	2.6	1.3	9.8	10.2	3.6	5.6
	'04-'05	0.0	16.1	2.4	1.1	14.2	13.0	1.2	4.0
	'05-'06	0.0	14.1	2.5	1.3	13.6	6.1	7.1	2.3
Sports Programmes	'02-'03	8.4	0.0	0.7	2.4	0.3	8.5	1.6	10.8
	'03-'04	5.8	0.4	0.8	1.3	0.1	12.0	5.6	9.9
	'04-'05	6.9	0.0	2.4	1.6	0.1	8.8	5.6	9.5
	'05-'06	4.8	0.0	4.0	1.6	0.0	11.4	7.6	13.4

% of transmission time		TELEVISION CHANNELS							
TYPES	TV SEASON	ALPHA	ALTER	ANT1	MEGA	STAR	ET1	NET	ET3
Other TV Programmes	'02-'03	1.4	2.8	3.4	3.2	2.4	0.7	4.1	2.1
	'03-'04	1.0	1.5	2.3	2.9	2.1	1.3	4.1	3.4
	'04-'05	1.1	2.3	2.7	3.0	2.1	5.4	1.6	5.0
	'05-'06	1.4	2.8	2.7	3.6	1.3	5.4	4.0	3.9

Table 5. 4: This table shows the broadcasting times of each programming category per season and channel. The analysis of broadcasting time was based on the material gathered from the University Research Institute of Applied Communication (University of Athens).

The fact that public broadcasters broadcast a very small number of TV series that they produce directly is illustrated in the following table, which includes data from AGB Hellas. Generally speaking, there is a fairly even split between Greek and foreign programmes, with the exception of series made for television or serials, which are mostly domestic productions, especially as far as private television channels are concerned. In addition, it is clear that television channels adopt mimicking strategies by providing similar programmes; it is worth pointing out that the reality games that record ratings of over 20% in all the private channels under examination are similar to foreign programmes, and many magazine programmes and game shows are copies or 'rip-offs' of foreign TV shows or programmes.



Average TV viewing share	TELEVISION CHANNELS					
TYPOLOGIES	ALPHA, ALTER, ANT1, MEGA& STAR			ET1 & NET		
	'03- '04 <sup>55</sup>	'04-'05 <sup>56</sup>	'05-'06 <sup>57</sup>	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06
<b>Greek Daily TV Series</b>	24.7	24.8	21.6	3.5	-	-
<b>US Daily TV Series</b>	7.3	3.5	-	9.1	6.9	3.8
<b>Other Foreign (Latin) Daily TV Series</b>	12.9	12.5	9.5	3.9	4.7	6.4
<b>Foreign Action-Adventure TV Series</b>	12.2	9.7	7.3	5.0	5.9	5.9
<b>Greek Weekly TV Series and Dramas</b>	22.5	22.9	19.4	7.4	21.9	5.3
<b>Foreign Weekly TV Series and Dramas</b>	13.2	12.6	12.2	4.1	5.1	3.6
<b>Greek Comedy TV Series</b>	22.0	19.7	27.1	6.9	4.8	5.4
<b>Foreign Comedy TV Series</b>	14.3	14.7	14.1	-	3.9	4.5
<b>Greek Movie Films</b>	12.9	11.5	11.0	7.2	5.5	6.1
<b>Foreign Movie Films</b>	13.5	13.8	12.2	5.1	4.9	4.7

<sup>55</sup>These data refer to the time periods from 22-9-2003 to 30-6-2004.

<sup>56</sup>These data refer to the time periods from 27-9-2004 to 3-7-2005.

<sup>57</sup>These data refer to the time periods from 12-9-2005 to 9-7-2006.

Average TV viewing share	TELEVISION CHANNELS					
TYPOLOGIES	ALPHA, ALTER, ANT1, MEGA & STAR			ET1 & NET		
	'03- '04 <sup>55</sup>	'04-'05 <sup>58</sup>	'05-'06 <sup>5</sup>	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06
<b>Newscasts</b>	16.6	16.6	15.6	8.9	9.7	9.0
<b>Morning Magazine Programmes and Tall Shows<sup>58</sup></b>	20.6	19.8	18.2	11.6	12.6	13.6
<b>Midday Magazine Programmes<sup>59</sup></b>	19.2	16.9	18.0	6.3	6.1	6.4
<b>Magazine Programmes in Other Time Slots &amp; Variety Shows<sup>60</sup></b>	17.1	14.8	16.6	4.0	4.9	5.0
<b>News-related and Information Programmes</b>	13.8	16.2	17.8	7.1	6.6	7.7
<b>Game Shows</b>	14.3	11.3	19.9	7.3	-	6.9
<b>Reality Games</b>	27.0	23.5	20.0	-	-	-
<b>Satirical TV Shows</b>	10.8	13.0	13.4	-	-	-
<b>Other Light Entertainment Programmes</b>	14.8	18.0	20.5	18.5	18.4	17.7
<b>Broadcasts of Sporting Events</b>	16.6	21.9	18.5	10.9	9.8	10.7

<sup>58</sup>Including programmes broadcast from 06:00 to 08:29 a.m.

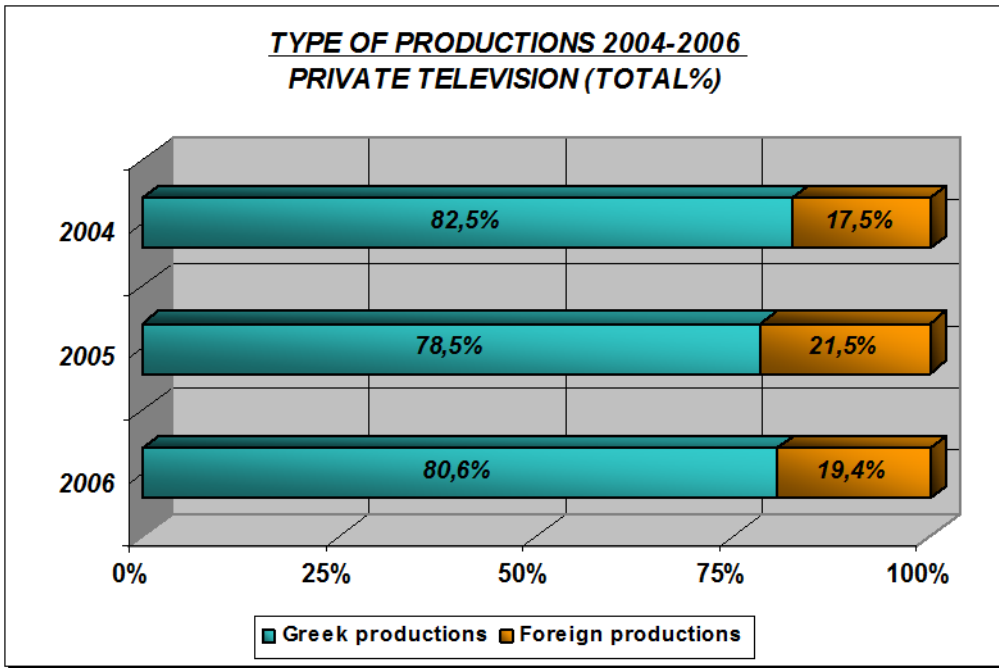
<sup>59</sup>Including programmes broadcast from 09:00 a.m. to 13:59 p.m.

<sup>60</sup>Including programmes broadcast from 14:00 p.m. to 23:59 p.m.

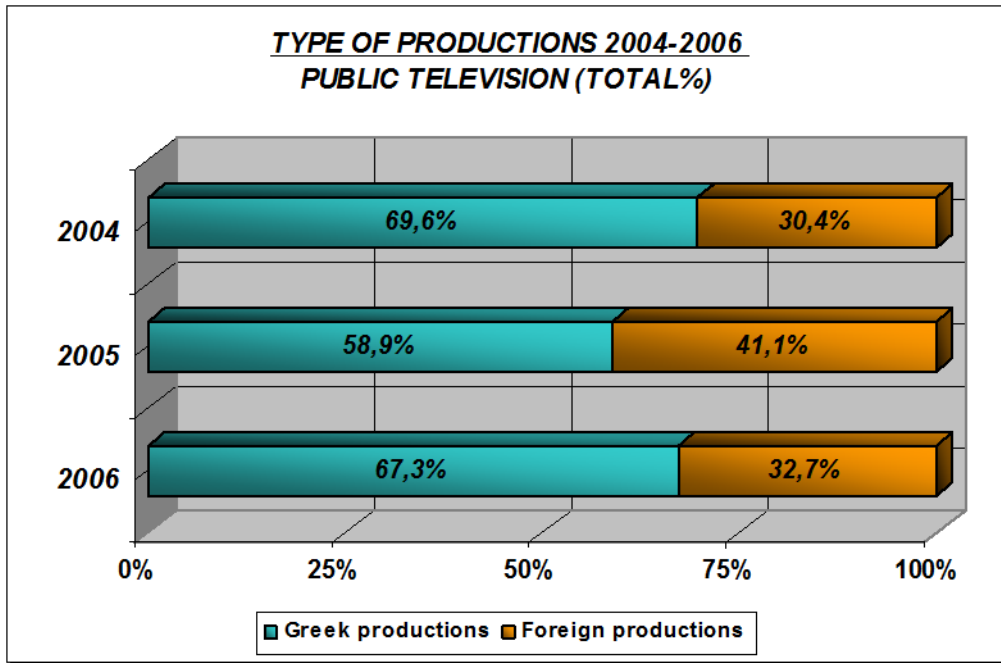
Average TV viewing share	TELEVISION CHANNELS					
TYPOLOGIES	ALPHA, ALTER, ANT1, MEGA & STAR			ET1 & NET		
	'03- '04 <sup>55</sup>	'04-'05 <sup>55</sup>	'05-'06 <sup>55</sup>	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06
<b>Sports Programmes</b>	12.7	12.3	12.6	6.2	6.8	6.9
<b>Arts &amp; Culture Programmes</b>	12.4	12.4	13.1	4.6	3.9	3.3
<b>Documentaries</b>	13.9	14.7	15.2	3.9	3.6	3.4
<b>Kids' Programmes &amp; Show</b>	10.1	10.3	9.6	3.1	3.1	6.8

Table 5. 5: This table shows average television viewing figures. The typology in this table is a combination of AGB Hellas' typology and classifications used by the television content magazines, which are mentioned extensively in the methodological chapter.

As far as the origin of Greek television productions are concerned, according to the findings of this study, there is a constant predominance of domestic over foreign productions. It is worth mentioning that, as far as private TV broadcasters are concerned, domestic productions prevail over foreign ones, in contrast to public service broadcasters, since the largest part of their TV schedule consists of domestic TV series and information programmes, news bulletins and news-related shows. Therefore, the fact that the percentage of foreign productions in television programming is low compared to domestic shows is not reassuring. The high percentage of domestic productions in private television, focusing mainly on information, news and entertainment programmes, clearly shows the channels' strategies in a competitive environment, which leads to homogeneity.

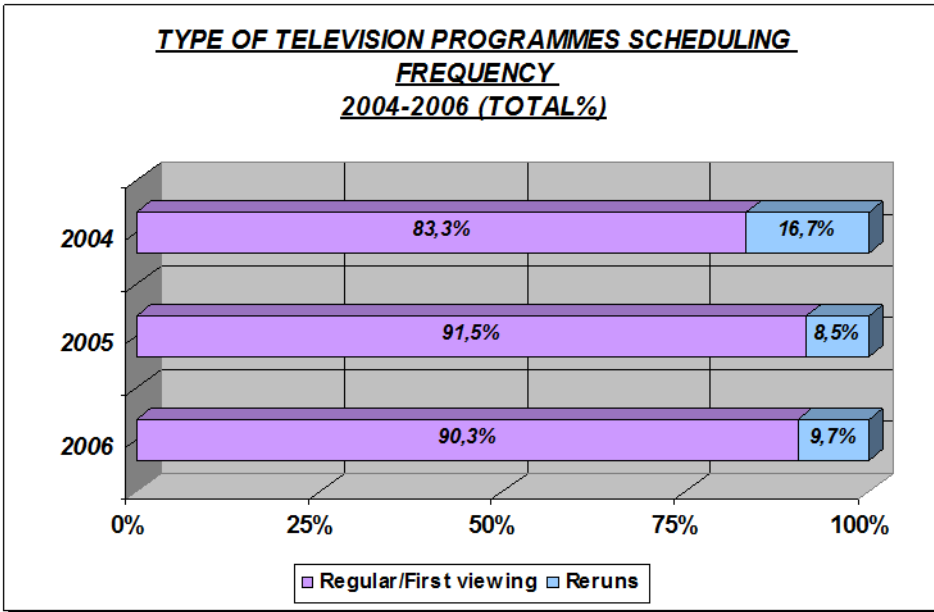


Graph 5. 1: this figure illustrates the number of domestic productions compared to foreign shows in private television, during 2004-2006.

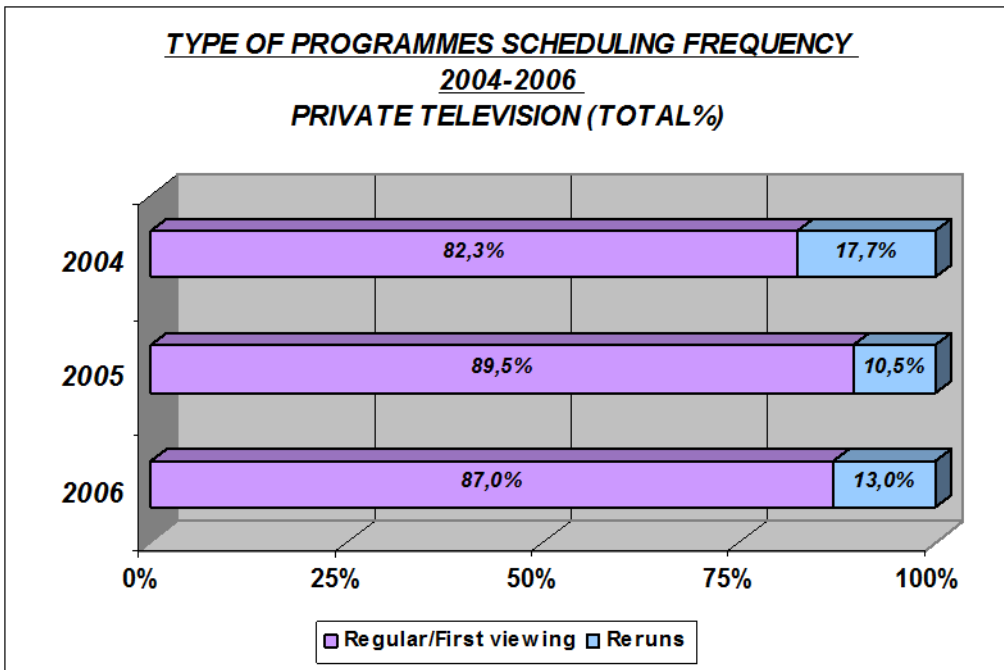


Graph 5. 2: This graphic illustrates the number of domestic productions compared to foreign shows in public television, during 2004-2006.

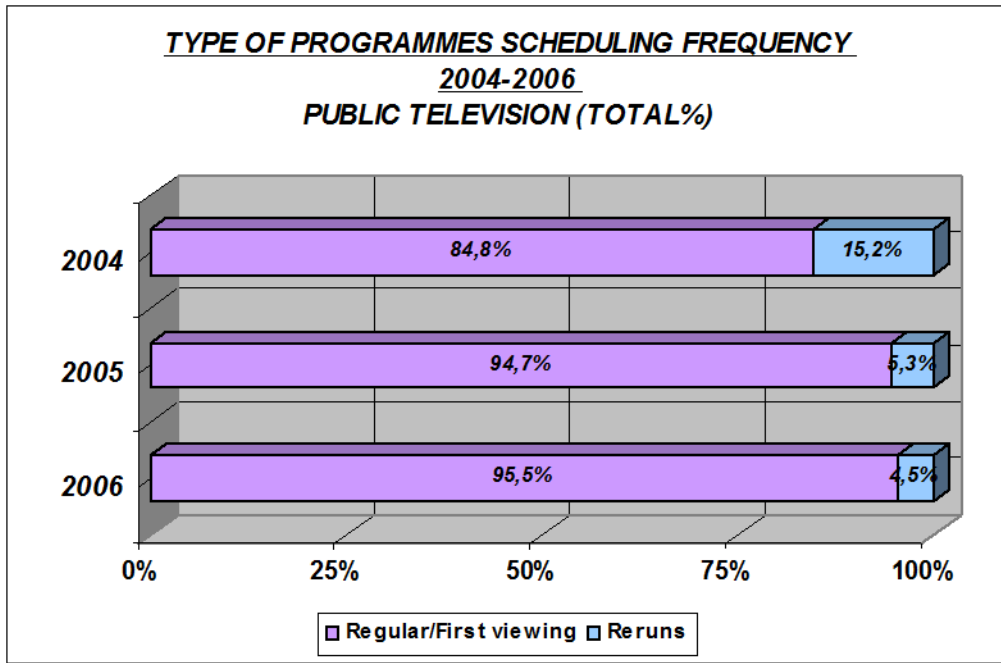
As far as the frequency of TV programming reruns is concerned, this study clearly shows that for TV channels, it is normal practice to have part of their programmes rerun, thus covering dead time slots. This practice is more frequent in private TV channels. It is worth pointing out that there are normally reruns of popular Greek TV series during graveyard hours, at noon or during certain weekend zones, filling up most of the viewing time with the same – mainly – low cost productions. Conversely, public service broadcasters, in 2004, had a high percentage of reruns but during the following years, the percentage of reruns was much lower because in 2004 the TV schedule of public service broadcasters consisted mainly of general broadcast documentaries and educational programmes, which were often aired repeatedly. In any case, however, that 16.7% of the total viewing share over the period 2004-2006 consisted of reruns, where 8.5% was recorded for reruns and repeats of programmes, is an indication of homogeneity and is due to the channels' policy of filling out the schedules at the lowest possible cost, attracting the largest possible audience.



Graph 5. 3: Frequency of programming airing as regards programmes premiering on television and reruns (total).



Graph 5. 4: Frequency of programming airing as regards programmes premiering on television and reruns (private television).



Graph 5. 5: Frequency of programming airing as regards the programmes premiering on television and reruns (public television).

The results of this empirical study on Greek television over the period 2004-2006 may be summarized as follows, especially where a trend of TV programming homogeneity is evident: It seems that after deregulation, numerical variety – horizontal and vertical – was recorded, especially regarding public service broadcasting. On the contrary, private TV broadcasting achieved a certain “quality homogeneity”, regardless of the significant variety of its programming. This homogeneity is related to the distribution of programming in the programming zones of private TV broadcasters. This homogeneous programming ends up limiting options, since viewers have to decide on various programmes of the same kind; this increases competition between the TV channels and does not contribute to the final quality of the TV output.

The second part of this empirical study examines public television comparatively, using Masouras’ research (2007), which was conducted for the Research Institute of Applied Communication, before and after deregulation, and analyses the trends following the arrival of private television. The comparison of programming development in public television

between the periods 1984-1986 and 2004-2006, as well as the analysis of the trends with regard to private television, is a crucial point of interest for the general study of television programming. Specifically, the following table shows that, during the period 1984-1986, public service broadcasters were airing mainly foreign series, movies, information, news-related and instructional programmes, documentaries, kids' programmes, and sports programmes.

<b>TYPES OF TV SHOWS</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1986</b>
News programmes	0.36%	0.00%	7.17%
Journalistic research programmes	2.15%	0.49%	3.50%
TV shows of general appeal, covering a wider spectrum of topics	0.00%	0.00%	1.42%
Talk or panel shows	0.66%	0.00%	0.88%
Shows on human interest stories	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Light infotainment shows	0.36%	0.00%	3.12%
Educational TV shows	9.81%	11.69%	11.28%
Specialized TV shows	2.39%	1.46%	1.48%
TV interviews/portraits	3.29%	2.37%	2.79%
Entertainment TV shows	3.95%	2.56%	3.29%
Arts and culture TV shows	7.78%	9.01%	4.49%
Sports shows	6.64%	5.84%	6.46%
Programmes dealing with religion	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%



<b>TYPES OF TV SHOWS</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1986</b>
Kids' shows & teens' shows	4.13%	9.62%	4.93%
News Bulletins	12.92%	14.06%	10.68%
Game Shows	2.93%	1.10%	3.72%
Reality shows	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
TV series	19.14%	16.07%	15.22%
Films	16.33%	18.26%	15.22%
Documentaries	7.18%	7.49%	4.33%
Other shows	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

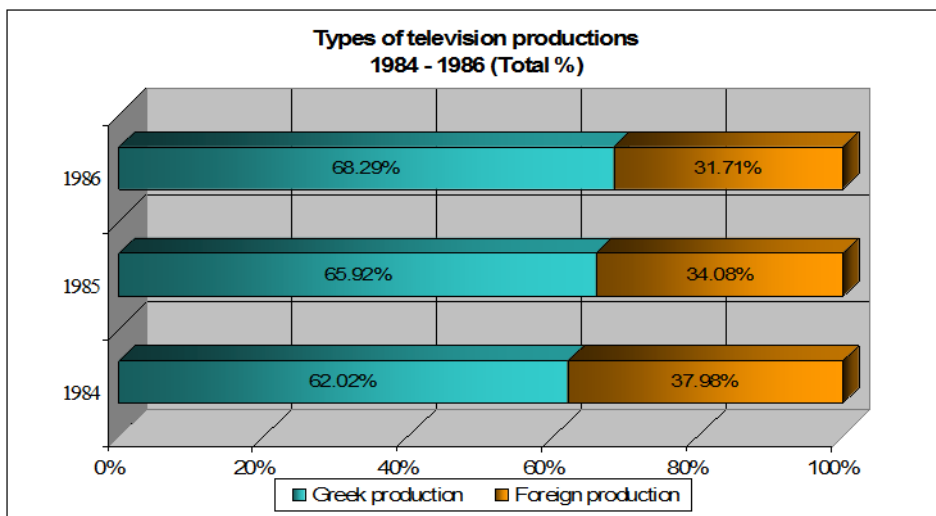
Table 5. 6: This table shows the programming types that were broadcast by public television in 1984, 1985 and 1986.

In addition, this study shows there to have been a high percentage of foreign productions – between 31.71% and 37.98% – on Greek television before the deregulation of the Hertzian waves. It is true that the percentage of domestic productions in Greek television increased dramatically with the advent of private television channels. Indicatively, the total percentage of foreign productions over the period 1984-1986 is 34.5% and the total percentage of foreign productions over the period 2004-2006 is 25.4% (19% for private television channels and 37.4% for their public counterparts).

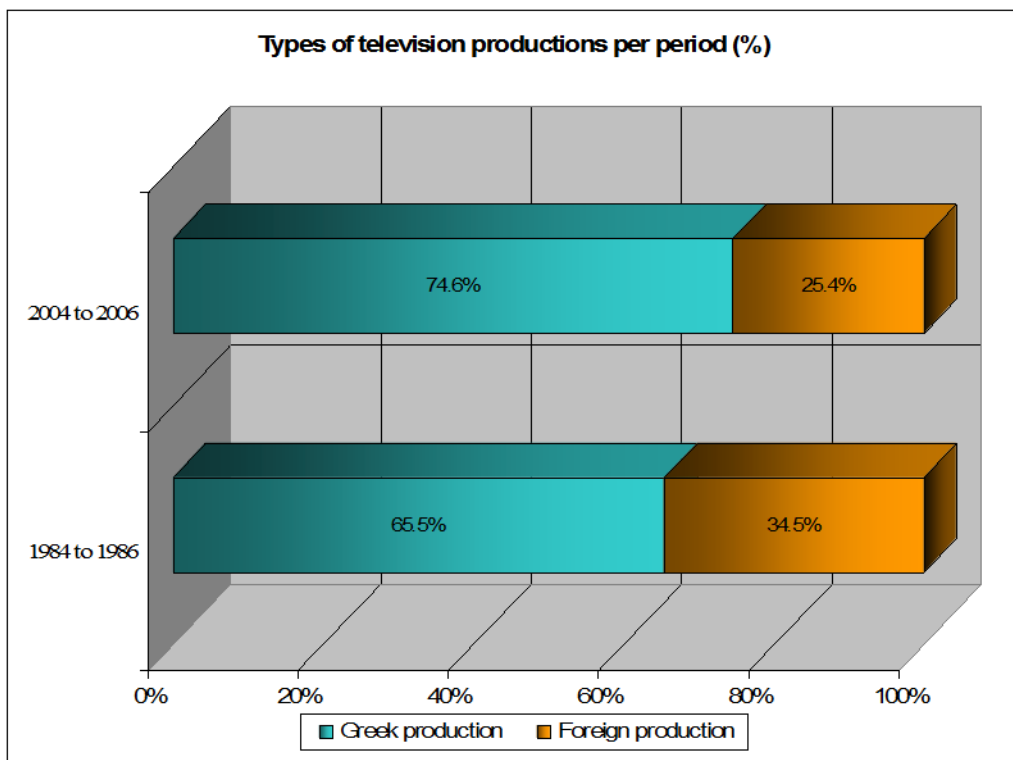
According to this research study, the 34.5% that corresponds to foreign productions aired by public broadcasters before deregulation includes not only commercial American or British productions, but also more alternative ones from countries like France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, China or Japan. This strategy seemed to neglect the law of supply and demand. Public television enjoyed a monopoly status in Greece until 1989 and its revenue

depended exclusively on advertising revenue and high viewing figures, leading to the broadcasting of quality and alternative programmes that did not attract necessarily large audiences.

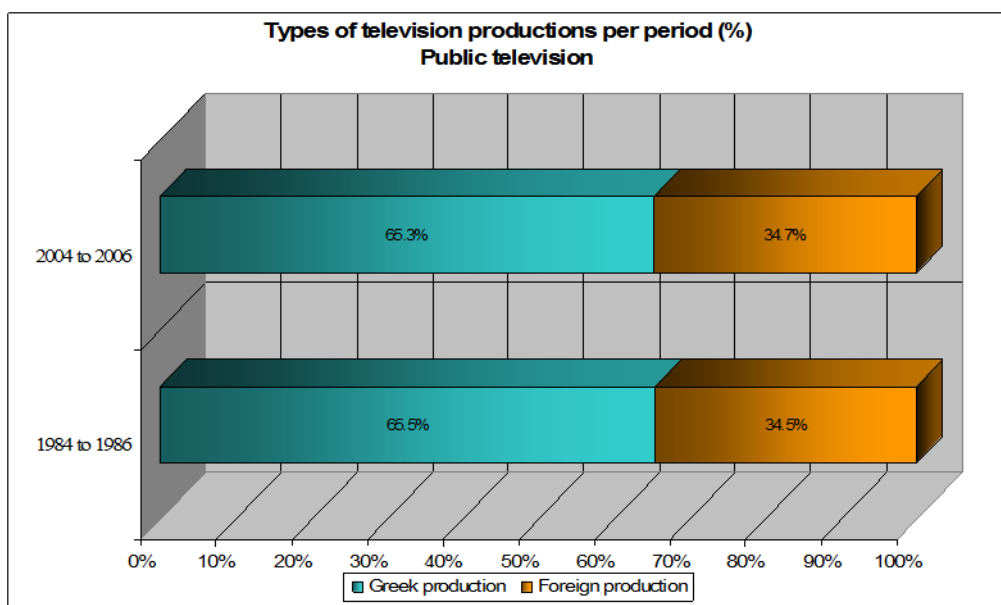
According to the information provided by this study, it is obvious that public broadcasters continued using the same strategy, even after the advent of competition. Private television channels resorted to producing low-cost domestic productions in order to continue in the competitive environment, while the public companies followed the same incorrect policy.



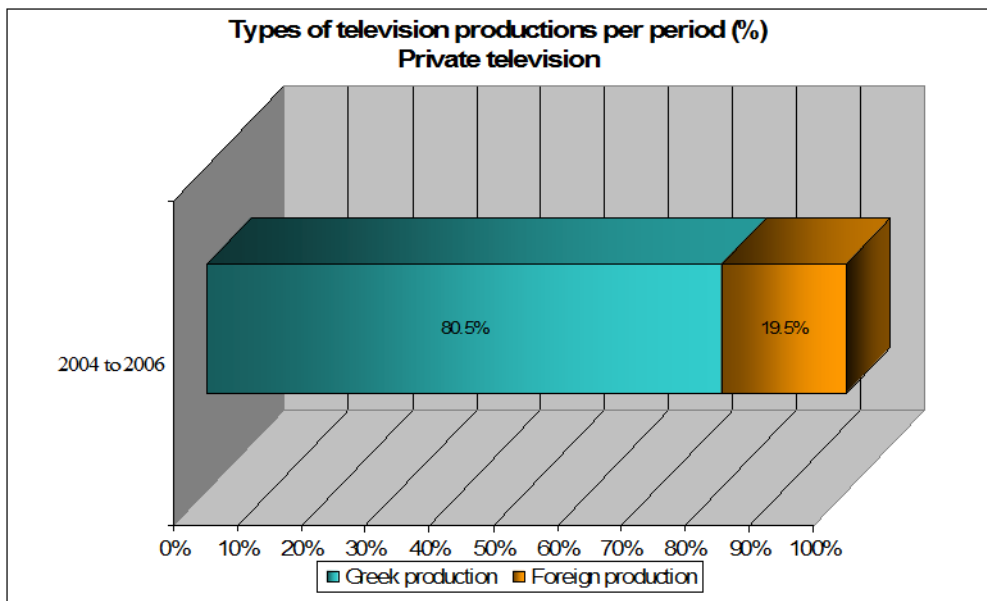
Graph 5. 6: Total recording of figures for domestic and foreign productions in 1984, 1985 and 1986.



Graph 5. 7: Total comparative recording of figures for domestic and of foreign productions in 1984, 1985, 1986 and in 2004-2006, respectively.

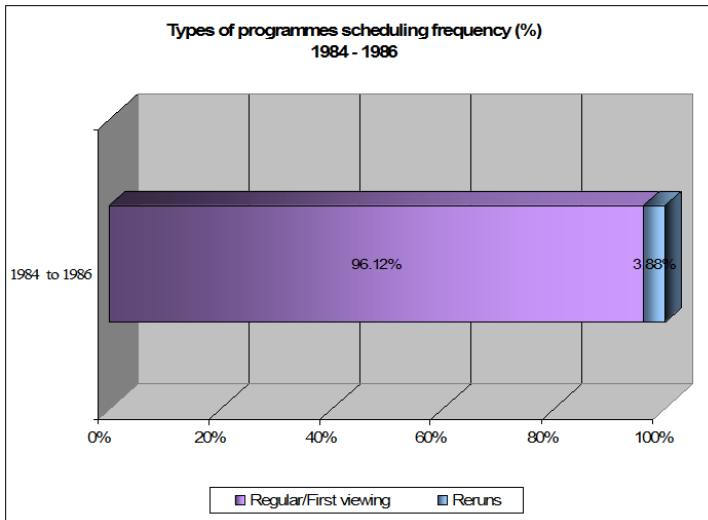


Graph 5. 8: Total comparative recording of figures for domestic and foreign productions in 1984, 1985, 1986 and in 2004-2006, respectively, for public television.

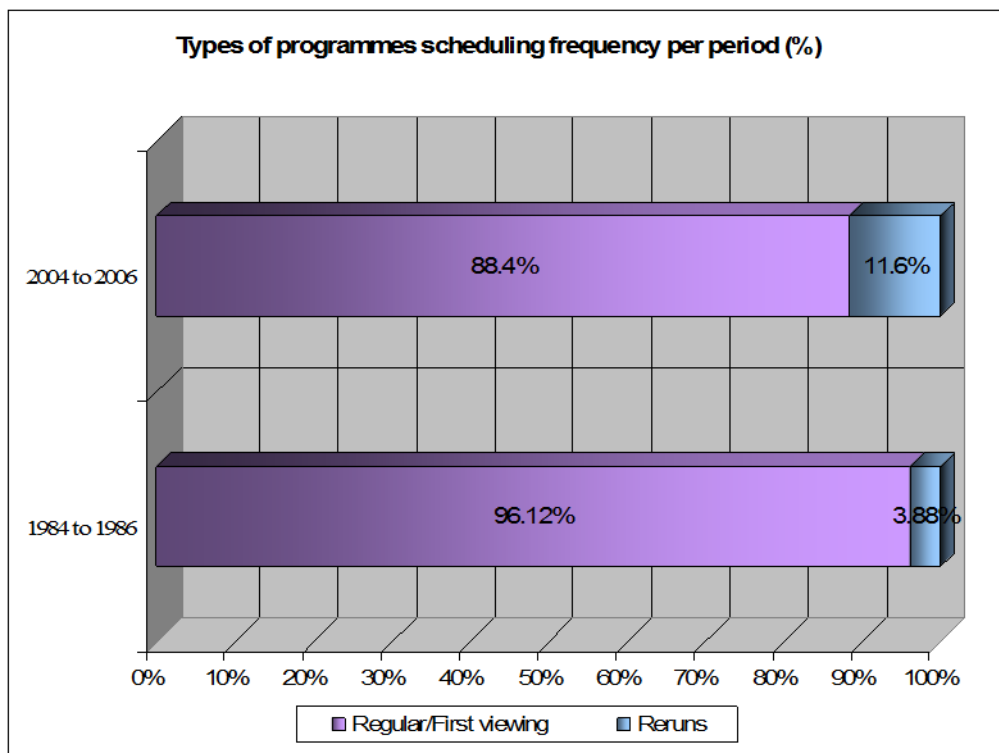


Graph 5. 9: Total comparative recording of the figures for domestic and foreign productions in 1984, 1985, 1986 and in 2004-2006, respectively, for private television.

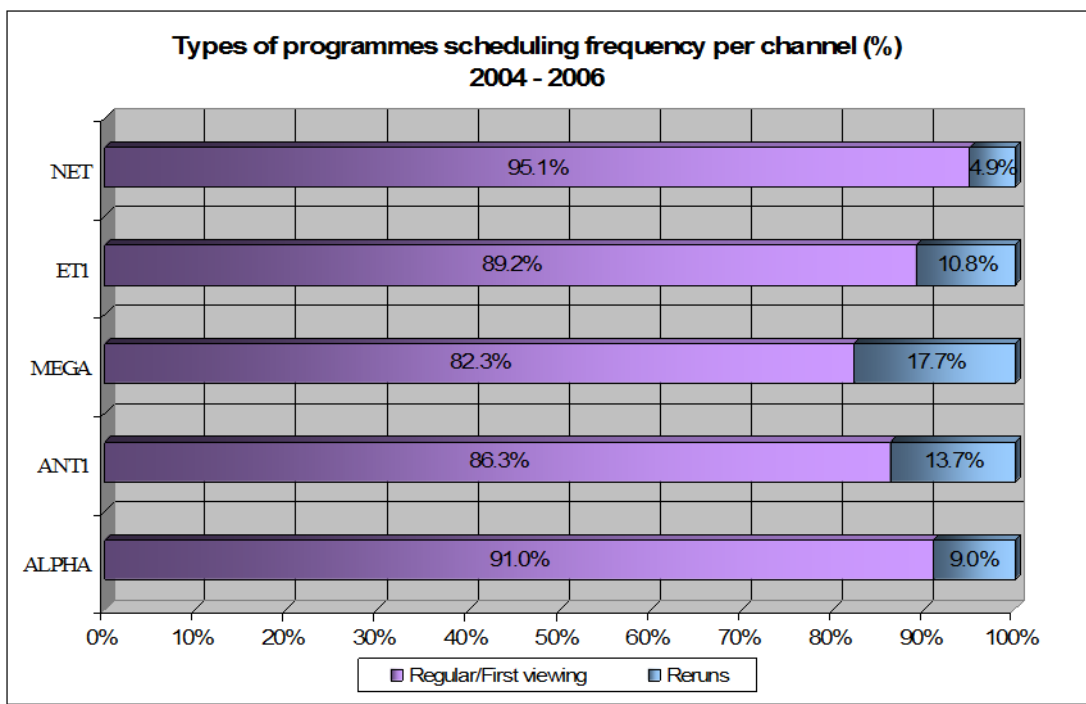
As far as the repeats and reruns of programmes over the period 1984-1986 are concerned, they constituted 3.88% of the total programming of public television, while they recorded 11.6% over the period 2004-2006. From examining in detail the two public broadcasters and the three private ones, the conclusion can be drawn that the percentage of repeats or reruns of TV shows and programmes is lower for public broadcasters than their private competitors (4.9% and 9%, respectively). In this area, public broadcasters tend less towards homogeneity in television programming than private companies.



Graph 5. 10: This graph shows the frequency of the reruns compared with the frequency of programmes premiering on television for the period from 1984 to 1986.



Graph 5. 11: This graph shows the frequency of the reruns compared with the frequency of programmes premiering on television for the period from 1984 to 1986 and from 2004 to 2006, comparatively.



Graph 5. 12: This graph shows the frequency of the reruns compared with the frequency of programmes premiering on television for the period from 2004 to 2006. This comparative presentation refers to two public television channels and three private ones.

Finally, the following table shows that the programming of Greek public television changed after the advent of competition, with an increase in the level of viewing of information programmes and news bulletins, kids' and teens' shows and programmes, TV series, documentaries, and TV shows of general appeal covering a wider spectrum of topics. This development was the result of a change of strategy by the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation in 1997, in order to prevent any further drop in TV viewing figures, which began with the advent of private television in 1989.<sup>61</sup> Specifically, since 1997, ET1 (Hellenic Television 1) adopted an entertaining style and NET (New Greek Television) became an informative and news-related channel, broadcasting different types of programmes compared to those broadcast by private television channels.

<sup>61</sup>See: S. Papatthanassopoulos, *Η τηλεόραση στον 21ο αιώνα (Television in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)*, Kastaniotis Editions, Athens, 2005 [in Greek].

TYPES OF TV SHOWS	TV CHANNELS						
	1984 – 1986		2004 – 2006				
	ET1	ET2	ALPHA	ANT1	MEGA	ET1	NET
News programmes	4.0%	0.8%	10.4%	9.0%	10.4%	0.0%	10.4%
Journalistic research programmes	3.1%	0.6%	0.8%	0.0%	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%
TV shows of general appeal, covering a wider spectrum of topics	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	1.4%	11.5%	0.9%
Talk or panel shows	0.9%	0.0%	1.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%	2.6%
Shows on human interest stories	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Light infotainment shows	2.1%	0.0%	2.8%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
Educational TV shows	17.4%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Specialized TV shows	0.8%	3.1%	2.8%	0.3%	3.8%	0.0%	1.2%
TV interviews/portraits	2.0%	3.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	2.1%	2.0%
Entertainment TV	3.2%	3.3%	10.5%	4.9%	6.7%	1.9%	3.5%

TYPES OF TV SHOWS	TV CHANNELS						
	1984 – 1986		2004 – 2006				
	ET1	ET2	ALPHA	ANT1	MEGA	ET1	NET
shows							
Arts and culture TV shows	6.9%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	11.7%	1.4%
Sports shows	6.2%	6.5%	3.0%	1.2%	0.2%	7.3%	2.3%
Programmes dealing with religion	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%
Kids' shows & teens' shows	6.5%	5.6%	0.0%	2.8%	0.4%	21.7%	10.2%
News bulletins	10.3%	15.5%	22.1%	19.5%	19.5%	7.2%	32.0%
Game shows	2.5%	2.8%	4.8%	4.8%	1.7%	0.3%	2.6%
Reality shows	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	6.1%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
TV series	11.6%	24.4%	22.3%	28.6%	40.2%	3.0%	16.2%
Films	14.3%	19.6%	8.0%	7.1%	7.4%	3.0%	9.6%
Documentaries	7.3%	4.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	21.1%	1.1%
Other shows	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	8.1%	4.2%	1.9%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5. 7: This table illustrates the programming of Greek television as regards programming types and the form of these programming types after the advent of private television.



By comparing these two research studies, it is clear that there were changes in public television before and after deregulation of the Hertzian waves. The most important are the internal changes that took place after the advent of competition, in 1997, which sought to stop the drop in television viewing figures. From that point onwards, NET and ET1 operated in a complementary way, providing good quality television at such a level that none of the private television channels could match their output. As such, Greek public television ensured a balance between the marketability and public nature of its mission by producing its own programmes and experimenting with different types of programmes, providing rich and diverse multilingual television programming content.

In a similar study related to the programming of Greek public television before and after the deregulation of the Hertzian waves, Tsourvakas concludes that competition gave public television a more commercial orientation.<sup>62</sup> Specifically, Tsourvakas examines the periods 1987-1989 and 1990-1992, providing limited and, possibly, out-of-date research results. According to his research findings, which are illustrated in detail in the following table, the TV schedules of public television were more homogenous compared to those of private television channels after deregulation.

Consequently, the research studies by Tsourvakas (2004) and the Research Institute of Applied Communication (2007) provide a more complete picture of the course of Greek public television and point to the same conclusion that the strategy followed by ERT (the Hellenic Public Corporation) after deregulation led to a more homogeneous television product. In fact, the results of a research study by Léon (2007) on the diversity of television programmes in different European countries are rather disappointing. The Greek public television broadcasting of documentaries represents 59.2% of prime-time programmes, showing the lowest indices of diversity in the public sector compared to other European countries.

In studies of Greek public television, a paradox emerges. Firstly, public broadcasters increased their information and news-related programmes following the strategy of the private television channels. Conversely, they broadcast a high percentage of documentaries

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<sup>62</sup>Specifically, Tsourvakas points out that “The findings suggest public television channels were affected by competition and changed their strategy to offer types of programmes similar to their private counterparts, shifting the focus of their programming strategy from an informational direction to a more commercial orientation” (Tsourvakas, 2004, p.202).

and educational programmes, leading to the provision of a highly homogeneous television product.

The overall picture that emerges from the analysis of the various research studies on Greek television is that the television product as a whole is largely homogeneous. During the years before deregulation and the advent of competition, the homogeneity of public television programming was due to political and ideological reasons. With the launch of private television channels and broader access, the Greek media landscape became even more homogeneous, following the law of Hotelling, which concerns the minimum differentiation in a competitive environment. In addition, the study by VanCuilenberg, by adapting the law of Hotelling in the media, is confronted with a diversity paradox, meaning that more diversity entails less diversity.

The findings of the research studies on Greek television clearly show that none of the channels examined follows any strategies that are different to those of the others. Private television channels broadcast a variety of information and entertainment programmes, confining themselves to low-cost domestic productions and commercially successful foreign programmes, as well as to a policy of reruns or repeats of programmes. With the advent of competition, public television adapted to the new conditions by enriching their programming with information programmes and foreign documentaries.

The study of homogeneity in television programming, especially with reference to competition, is quite a complex issue when we consider the different aspects of homogeneous programming that were analysed in the theory chapter of this study. In addition, developments in the field of Greek media occur very rapidly, which results in an urgent need to conduct new research studies. Moreover, when conducting more detailed research studies, it would be interesting to include private television channels which attract a smaller share of the audience, which may possibly provide a more differentiated product, such as SKAI TV,<sup>63</sup> as well as new channels, such as MTV Greece.<sup>64</sup> In addition, a study

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<sup>63</sup>SKAI TV is a Greek TV channel, based in Athens. It is one of the largest media groups in Greece. SKAI TV was first launched in 1993 with an emphasis on news and sports, but it was heavily criticized for its “yellow press” news coverage and low-budget programming. In 1999, it was sold and re-branded as ALPHA TV. The new channel had an entirely different programming perspective and opted for a more mainstream profile. In 2007, SKAI TV was launched again. At its launch, it opted to dub all its foreign language content into Greek, instead of using subtitles. This is very uncommon in Greece for anything except documentaries (using voiceover dubbing) and children’s programmes (using lip-synced dubbing), so after intense criticism the channel switched to using subtitles for almost all foreign shows. SKAI TV’s programme emphasizes entertainment and information.

<sup>64</sup>MTV Greece is the Greek version of MTV, launched on 1 September, 2008. MTV Greece broadcasts mainly English, American and Greek music, MTV’s shows are subtitled in Greek but there are also three Greek shows (Hitlist Hellas, MTV Pulse, MTV Take 20). MTV Greece is also available via NOVA Greece.

combining quantitative and qualitative research examining more types of homogeneous programming could be conducted as well.

This specific research study also aimed at showing the impact of competition in the Greek media field. A variety of foreign and Greek research studies was analysed and the outcome was that competition had a negative effect on Greek television, an assessment that results from the homogeneous character of the programming types. The first and chief point of interest in this chapter is not the empirical findings and conclusions but the association and connection of content homogeneity with diversity, thus dealing with two interrelated and interactive concepts.

As pointed out before, when discussing the relevance of these concepts, I defined homogeneity of content as a lack of diversity or a low degree of diversity, which can be identified by quantitatively assessing the programming types (variety of types) available to the television audience. In order to determine the correlation between homogeneity and diversity, I will use the concept of type availability as a prevailing conceptual variable. The level of programming types available to the television audience is an issue that needs further discussion, since a high level of availability does not necessarily mean that there is a high degree of diversity. The availability of programming types may have different qualities and characteristics, as shown by the empirical data and findings presented above. From these studies, certain correlations can be presented, as we investigate the nature of availability: a) if there are more than five or six programming types in specific genres or if specific sub-genres fall under specific genre categories, regardless of their numeric availability, then the content is homogeneous and the degree of diversity is at a low level and this kind of diversity can be considered homogeneous diversity or targeted diversity, as the diversity is concentrated within the narrow limits of specific programming types and b) another form of availability, resulting from my empirical studies, is the availability of repeats or reruns, a tactic that is widespread, especially as far as private television is concerned, but also one where the cost is negligible and television scheduling is easily filled up. In this case, the aim is to specify the proportion of repeats as well as reruns, as they represent, in essence, existing programming types. Thus, if the original content is homogeneous, then the reruns and repeats will be based on existing homogeneous programming types, leading to a low degree of diversity. Conversely, if the content is not homogeneous, the repeats or reruns will not be homogeneous either, but this depends on this relevance: Repeats and reruns fill up air

time and space, which means that the production of new programmes is greatly reduced and the promotion of new programming types is hindered. Reruns and repeats, therefore, contribute substantially to the sharp reduction of content diversity. The same reasoning applies to the case of foreign productions, either reality shows or series. Homogeneity, as far as genres of foreign productions are concerned, for instance low-cost Brazilian soap operas, has a negative impact on the degree of content diversity.

The use of the concept of availability is significant, as it shows the conceptual and methodological correlation between content homogeneity and content diversity. Thus, based on the above examples concerning the availability of programmes, availability as a concept is relevant. It may be homogeneous as regards programming types, as in the case of Greece where public broadcasting diversifies slightly, but it may not be homogeneous in some instances. The homogeneity or heterogeneity of the programming availability actually defines whether the programming and content in general have high, average or low degrees of diversity.

The following chapter deals with viewpoint diversity in Greek television.

## **CHAPTER SIX: AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH TO GREEK VIEWPOINT DIVERSITY**

This chapter presents the application of the methodology for the study of viewpoint diversity in television news, which was analysed in the fourth chapter. More specifically, the application takes place along three axes: The study of diversity in the range of topics, the study of people diversity and the study of time diversity, which is the time that is given by the channels to various topics. At first, the nature of television news casts is discussed.

### **6.1. The significance of news bulletins**

As stressed before, viewpoint diversity is usually considered with respect to the content of news and informational shows, since these types of programmes involve the element of opinion to a far greater degree and intensity than other programming genres. In addition, the message of these programmes is more easily decoded. For instance, a movie may include an ideological message hidden in the plot, whereas, in news bulletins the message is clear and directly expressed by representatives of various opinions and ideologies. Therefore, newscasts are the ideal genre for a researcher studying viewpoint diversity. In this chapter, the content of news bulletins is studied, that is, the diversity of news content is studied, based on certain parameters that were discussed in the methodology chapter. However, prior to the application, this subchapter deals with the analysis of some empirical approaches with regard to the role and the nature of news bulletins in Greece, as they are perceived by their own chief editors.

According to the editor-in-chief of the news programmes aired by ANT1 TV in 2010, Lefkos Christou (pers. comm., 2010), the main news bulletin of a TV channel should be a reflection of the channel itself. The reliability, validity and objectivity of the main news define the identity of the channel. ANT1's main evening news bulletin reflects the integrity of the TV channel. The answer to the question of how the main news bulletin builds the branding of the overall content of the channel is reliability. A news bulletin should be reliable, valid, timely and objective and it should provide pluralist news coverage of the latest current affairs at a local or international level.

Christou (pers. comm., 2010), considers that the main news bulletin is shown at the heart of the prime-time TV viewing period because this is when the overwhelming majority of the

viewers will already be watching television and therefore ready to watch the daily news. For this reason, companies that record overall viewing figures for television channels consider the viewing figures for news bulletins the most important factor when measuring ratings. Besides, main news bulletins are broadcast in the prime-time slot, usually starting at 18:00 and ending at 24:00.

In addition, the editor-in-chief of ANT1 TV points out that, during the Gulf crisis, CNN played a leading part in the live broadcast of allied forces removing Iraqi troops from Kuwait, and this was a small revolution in the field of television: A precedent for the live broadcast of significant events at the place where the events were actually happening was established. With respect to production, the news bulletin has moved beyond a single image, since all television channels, with the support of technology, have introduced the split-screen view. The American way of news casting has also affected Europe, even the BBC – a conservative broadcaster. A main news bulletin will always try to find ways of attracting more viewers in order to achieve high viewing figures and reach an identifiable audience. These days, viewers are hard to please, as they are aware of what is going on all over the world due to satellite television. Therefore, any positive change in or innovation of a news bulletin is used by rival channels. In Greece, all television channels follow the same procedure: Announcement of the news bulletin menu through trailers and the presentation of headlines or other information through news tickers or “crawlers”. All news reports are accompanied by titles, so that the viewer knows what is going on in cases when there is no sound. The accompanying video material of a news report is richer and the news report is combined with these televised scenes. During the last few years, news reports have been interlarded with cards, as appropriate. This innovation is used in news reports related to statistical data or written statements. Objectivity, reliability and validity are essential for a news bulletin. Timely news reporting is very important, as viewers favour the channel that is the first to inform them about an important event.<sup>65</sup> These elements, as well as modern news coverage, are determinant factors in identifying a high-flying TV channel.

Finally, Christou considers that a channel's tactics and methods of diversification are inherent to the economic cost of a main news bulletin, which constitutes about 65% of the total expenditure of a TV channel. Imponderables are inevitable, since the news bulletin is a live information tool and news reporting is unpredictable. A news bulletin can change

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<sup>65</sup>The viewer acknowledges/recognizes the fact that he is being informed quickly of important events (and as a result, rewards the channel by being a faithful viewer).

dramatically even on air due to breaking news. Furthermore, technical problems may occur and “blacken” the screen temporarily. However, there are safeguards such as having a generator available in case of a power cut. As far as the items used for productions, this depends on the identity of each television channel. One channel may be “news-oriented” and focus on the analysis of news building, impacting on its branding. Conversely, another channel may be “lighter” in its approach. During the last few years, television channels in Greece have increased their number of domestic productions, since the audience prefers domestic over foreign television productions.

As far as the same channel is concerned, the foreign news chief editor of the Athens News Agency, Michalis Psilos (pers. comm., 2008), who cooperates with the news department at ANT1 TV, has the same philosophy regarding content diversification. He states that the achievement of diversification is related to the people who appear in a televised news bulletin, in particular, those who make comments in the split-screen sections of the broadcast. Moreover, Psilos outlines the diversification of Greek TV channels as follows: Information and news-related programmes at MEGA TV account for about 20% of output, since this TV channel aims to cover major political events with unbiased and serious reporting. ANT1 TV is not as interested in promoting political issues; on the contrary, this channel is interested in promoting social issues which highlight the social unrest of citizens with its news bulletins and uses most of the bulletin for discussions instead of broadcasting video material. ALPHA TV tries to imitate the style of MEGA TV, but, according to Psilos, this channel does not have the same validity and prestige as MEGA TV. Finally, the apolitical news bulletin transmitted by STAR CHANNEL does not deal to a great extent with political or social issues, as it is not interested in politics or political neutrality; most of the channel’s news bulletins feature lifestyle, showbiz and fashion news, leaving many serious subjects either completely out of the newscast or giving them very little broadcasting time. This news programming targets a dynamic audience aged between 15 and 30 years and has the highest rating of all the other news bulletins, since it differs completely (Psilos, pers. comm., 2008).

The news department director for MEGA Channel, Pavlos Milonas (pers. comm., 2010), deals with the structure and scheduling of news bulletins. Specifically, when referring to the morphology of diversification, he considers that it is closely related to the people involved with the news bulletin, especially the journalists, news anchors and commentators. Milonas

points out that the parameters of the ideas of the journalists, the interests of the channel and the bulletin's style define the content of the news bulletin, thus shaping its form.

As regards the time placement of newscasts, Milonas points out that the programmes that the channel decides to show before and after the news bulletin are significant, as this is how the channel's prime-time zone is constructed; moreover, the starting time of the news bulletin is essential, since if it starts even a few minutes earlier than the news bulletin of a rival channel, it will attract the attention of a significant portion of the television audience due to this diversification. Finally, Milonas points out that at MEGA TV the total length of the anchors' delivery in proportion to the total length of the news bulletin is longer compared with ANT1 TV, since ANT1 places the utmost importance on videos and news reports, and MEGA TV is interested in the comments and the views of the anchors, journalists, correspondents or commentators involved with the news bulletin (Milonas, pers. comm., 2010).

It is concluded from the above accounts from professionals in the industry that the style and content of news bulletins reflect the image of the television channel, and this is why they are far more important than the other programming genres. Through a news bulletin, the factors that may create a notional background of the status of the channel's programming are promoted. In simple words, the issue here is not that the entire programming is based on the image of the news bulletin, or that the news bulletin is based on the entire programming, but that the news bulletin is used as a vehicle to show the image of the channel to the viewer. It may be, for instance, a "serious" and reputable TV channel, a "primarily news-oriented" channel that is a power newsmonger, a "light infotainment" channel<sup>66</sup> (Graber, 1994) or a channel with other features used to describe its profile. Diversification between television channels – the variation between content and tactics as defined and analysed in this chapter – is pursued through the brand positioning undertaken in news bulletins. The author of this thesis considers that a television channel can more easily define its difference from other channels through news bulletins than through any other programme, since news bulletins are more "flexible" as far as their format, structure and purpose are concerned.

Fundamentally, the main news bulletin is viewed as the build-up of shorter news bulletins broadcast throughout the day and that constitute the backbone on which the entire programming of the channel is based. Therefore, news bulletins give programming coherence

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<sup>66</sup>In her research, Doris Graber discusses the new trends in television programming, specifically using the term, 'Infotainment'. Specifically, Graber examines the extent to which television channels supply citizens with essential political information or if they use other techniques as well such as factual reporting and the dramatization of news.



and cohesion, building up to the main news bulletin. The repeated advertising spots that show throughout the main news bulletin what will be broadcast later keep the viewer alert and watching the same channel for as long as possible. This is usually the role of newsflashes, the average length of which is two minutes.

Fields (1988) considers that a fully qualitative analysis of the different levels of messages may provide us with information on all the elements that constitute a message. In an effort to isolate and classify the elements that constitute a televised news bulletin, by trying to create an electronic formula for recording these elements, Idea and Tanaka (1998) distinguish these elements into two categories: Grammatical characteristics and semantic characteristics. Elements related to language, such as the composition of sentences and specifically the omission of the subject or the use of a noun at the end of a sentence, come under the first category. Elements related to technical issues such as live links, the news in brief and the organizational structure of the news bulletin are classified as semantics. Idea and Tanaka's (1998) research distinguishes between television elements which aim to create a formula for the classification of electronic data. This modifies this research study (Idea and Tanaka, 1998) up to a point, since its aim is to automate the analysis of data and not to present a primary qualitative or quantitative analysis of the content of the news bulletins. This matter will be discussed below as well, with respect to viewpoint diversity, since its approach, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, is extremely challenging

The economic aspect of a televised news bulletin is quite interesting, as it usually has fixed expenses – which will be presented in detail through empirical analysis – even though it includes live exterior links. TV channel owners control the budget of their news bulletins do not, expenditure-wise, cross the red lines drawn by the TV channel owners, over against a TV series, for instance, that includes imponderables such as low audience figures and the fiasco.

Televised news bulletins have specificities related to their level of diversity as regards the range of topics and the frequency of broadcasting. The main specificity over other programming genres is the fact that one can refer to the content diversity of a news bulletin. Conversely, one cannot refer to the content diversity of a film for instance, since it has no specific topics, so one should refer to the diversity of technical features instead. Therefore, televised news bulletins differ from other programmes due mainly to their range of topics as well as to the diversity of ideas developed throughout the bulletin.

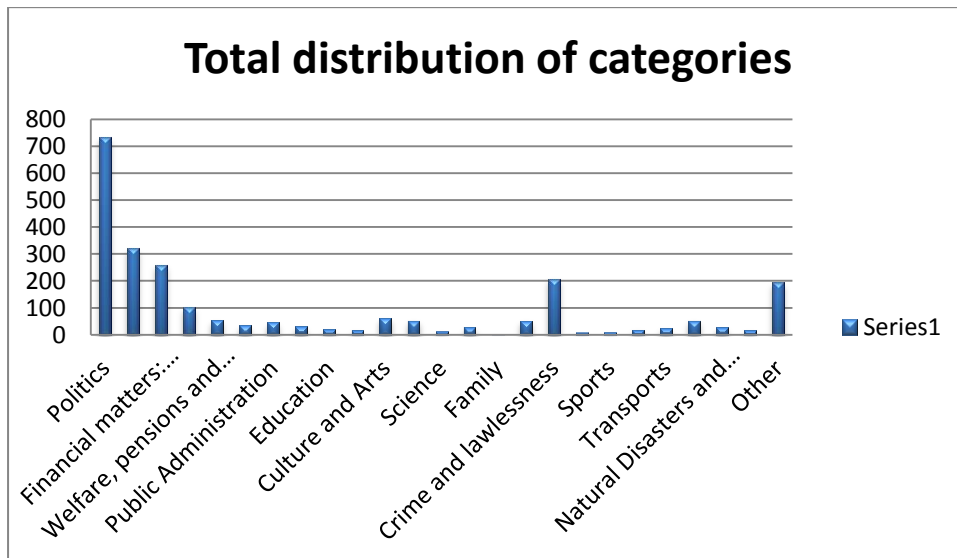
## **6.2. The empirical analysis of viewpoint diversity**

### **6.2.1. Diversity in the range of topics**

The first point that is empirically studied with regard to viewpoint diversity in Greek television is the range of the thematic agenda that is the news coverage. It should be stressed that the categorization of the topics is not nominal. In other words, the study is not only concerned with the main categories, such as “Economy”, but there are subcategories and what is basically examined is the diversity in the range of topics. If news coverage is viewed in parallel with the respective range of topics that was previously mentioned in genre diversity, then in this case as well, topics are classified into genres and subgenres. “Economy”, for example, is a main genre. If this genre is further divided into more specific topics, such as cost of life and unemployment, then these two topics are subgenres of economy. In this way, journalistic content is categorized and through this categorization its degree of diversity can be assessed. As was mentioned in the beginning of this thesis and in the context of the methodological chapter, the empirical application of viewpoint diversity is based on the comparative analysis of the diversity of topic coverage, with respect to the time periods that were mentioned in the methodological chapter. The study focuses on the diversity of representation provided by the channels, and, in particular, by the main news bulletins, of people that express political views or ideologies of other groups. In addition, the temporal distribution is also studied – as a constituent element that facilitates the assessment of the degree of diversity – and a comparative analysis of the topics’ temporal distribution is conducted, with respect to the periods before and during the economic crisis.

The first point, namely the diversity of news coverage and the category of political topics, shows a steady development during all the time periods under examination, with the exception of November 2011, when political topics reached a percentage of 24.8% in news bulletins, due to the political conditions of that period, brought about by the announcement of early elections. It is important to mention that politics is the topic with the highest broadcasting percentages during the whole period of examination and it is close to the category of financial matters. Apart from this general observation, the amount of broadcasting differs among the channels under examination. For instance, political topics were broadcast 211 times on NET, 275 on MEGA, 133 on ANT1 and 115 on ALPHA. Therefore, there is significant divergence among the channels. On the other hand, politics, along with financial matters, is the main category in all channels; hence there is homogeneity

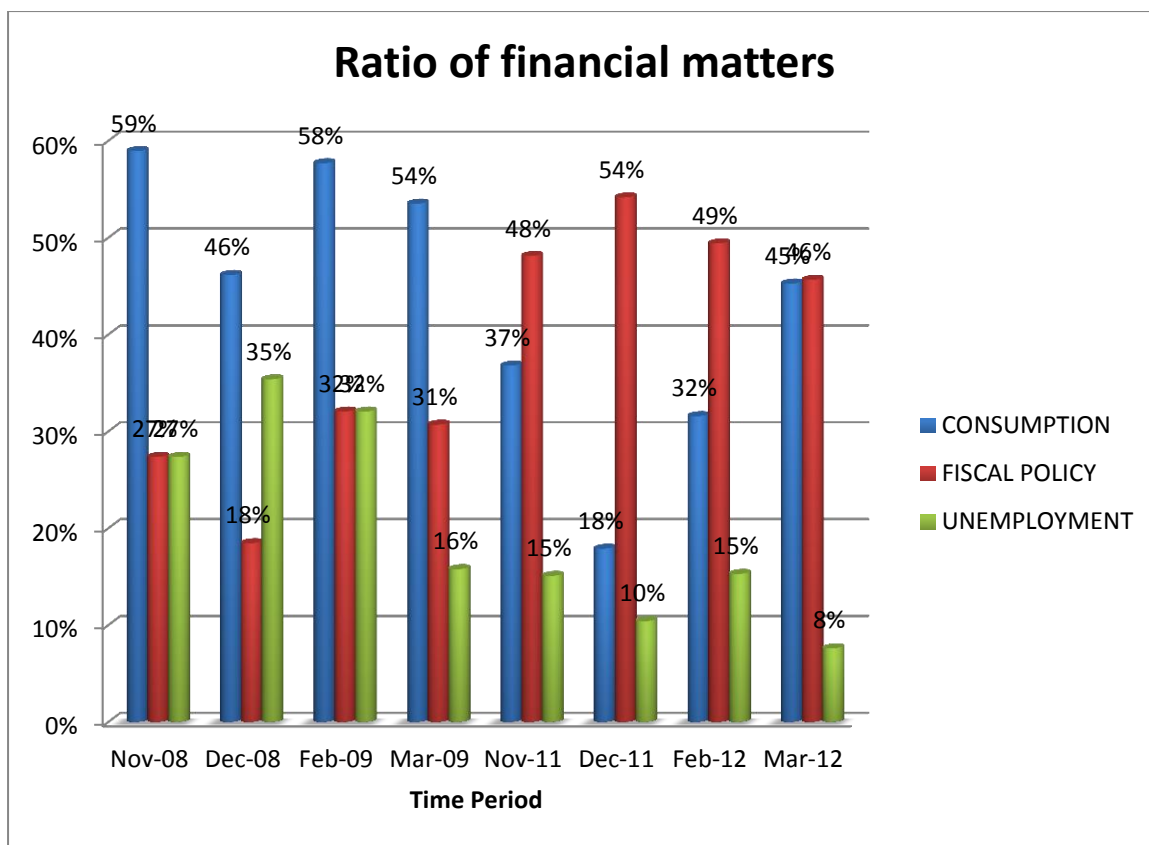
with regard to news coverage diversity. The low degree of diversity becomes even more prominent when the high percentages for politics and finance are compared to those of the other categories, such as education, arts and culture. The following graph illustrates these comparisons.



Graph 6. 1: This graph presents the total number of broadcastings in the channels under examination, according to duration. Politics is the category that constitutes the main journalistic genre in newscasts. The vertical column shows the frequency of times that are displayed under the categories (overall in the channels). For example, the category “politics” appears approximately 700 times in the channels and the period under investigation.. For the extraction of data the Audiovisual Laboratory of Athens University was used. The categorization of news is also based on the formula developed by the Audiovisual Laboratory of Athens University.

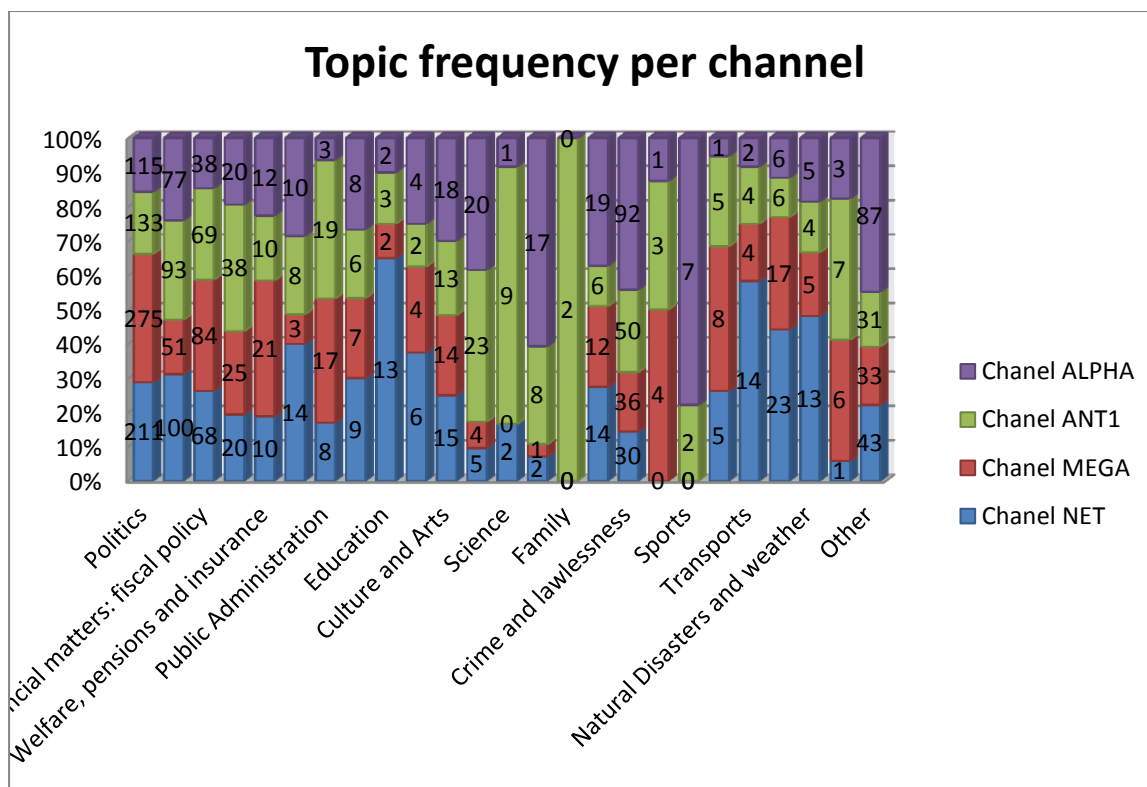
The category that, like politics, has significantly high percentages of broadcasting is financial matters. Due to its high degree of diversity and because of its special features that emanate from this recent period of the economic crisis, this genre is divided into subgenres. These are the following: Consumption and cost of life, fiscal policy, and unemployment. Consumption and cost of life is the subgenre dealt with by the most news bulletins during the pre-crisis period, namely in November - December 2008 and February - March 2009, since it has the highest broadcasting percentage compared to all other periods that are examined in the research. More specifically, in November 2008 the matter of consumption and cost of life was broadcast 56 times in the channels under examination and in March 2009, it appeared 61 times. The paradox of this is that one would expect this topic to appear more during the crisis period, namely in November - December 2001 and February - March 2012, but the data of

this research show a decline in the use of this matter by the channels under examination. This, however, does not imply that the total percentage of the financial genre has decreased, since the subcategory of fiscal policy – which is included in the wider financial category – shows an increase, in contrast to the subcategory of cost of life. It should be mentioned that this subgenre was broadcast 42 times in February and March 2012, respectively. In other words, it presents the same broadcasting percentage both in February 2012 and in March 2012, specifically 16.2% of the total of this subgenre during the periods under examination. In addition, it can be observed that in November 2011, a crucial period for the economic crisis in Greece, the subgenre of fiscal policy is the most covered topic. For the financial genre, however, the unemployment subgenre is of particular interest. One would logically expect that this subgenre would appear more in the news. On the contrary, it presents, at least initially, a stable broadcasting percentage and in March 2012 its percentage decreases. This can be interpreted in several ways. A possible explanation – which also concerns the weaknesses of the methodology that is used to approach journalistic content diversity – is that a topic may be approached in a different manner and consequently will fall under another subcategory. For instance, unemployment matters may be presented within the broader context of fiscal policy. In this case, there is a conflict of topic coverage – when one subgenre falls under another category – which hinders the methodological recording and analysis.



Graph 6. 2: In this graph the category of financial matters is isolated and divided into three subgenres, namely consumption, fiscal policy and unemployment, which are comparatively presented, according to the time periods under examination. Here the vertical column shows the statistical variable frequency in proportion, i.e. the factor of slot allocation in percentage. For example, if we take into account the sub-category of "unemployment" during the month of November appears in the channels in 27% of the total percentage.

With respect to other journalistic genres, the category of crime and lawlessness has a high but stable frequency of broadcasting, without any significant variation. The remaining journalistic genres – as is shown in the following tables – have a uniform, but also low, broadcasting frequency.

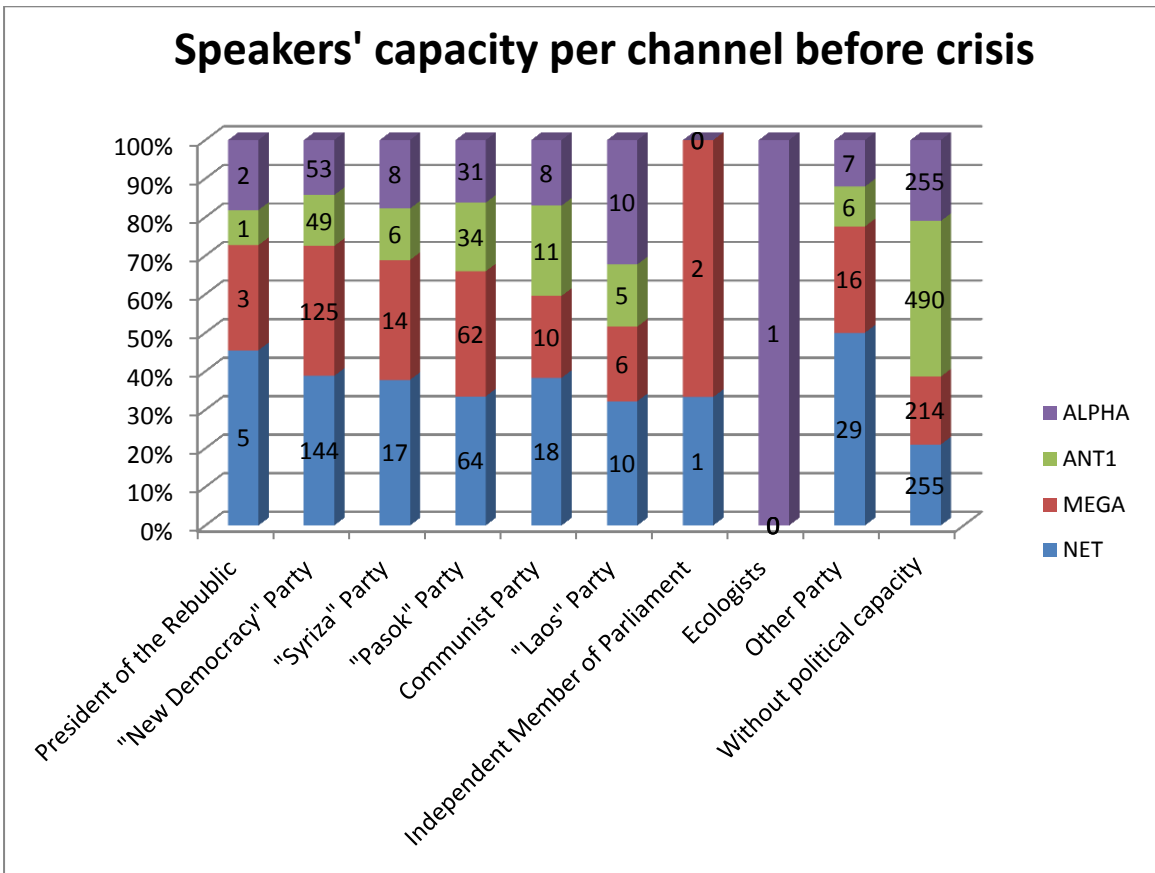


Graph 6. 3: Here, the news genres are presented, according to each channel’s broadcasting percentage. The vertical column shows the percentage of incidence of categories listed in the horizontal column per channel. In particular the rates here the vertical column shows the total time display of various categories within the context of the timeframe.

### 6.2.2. People diversity in newscasts

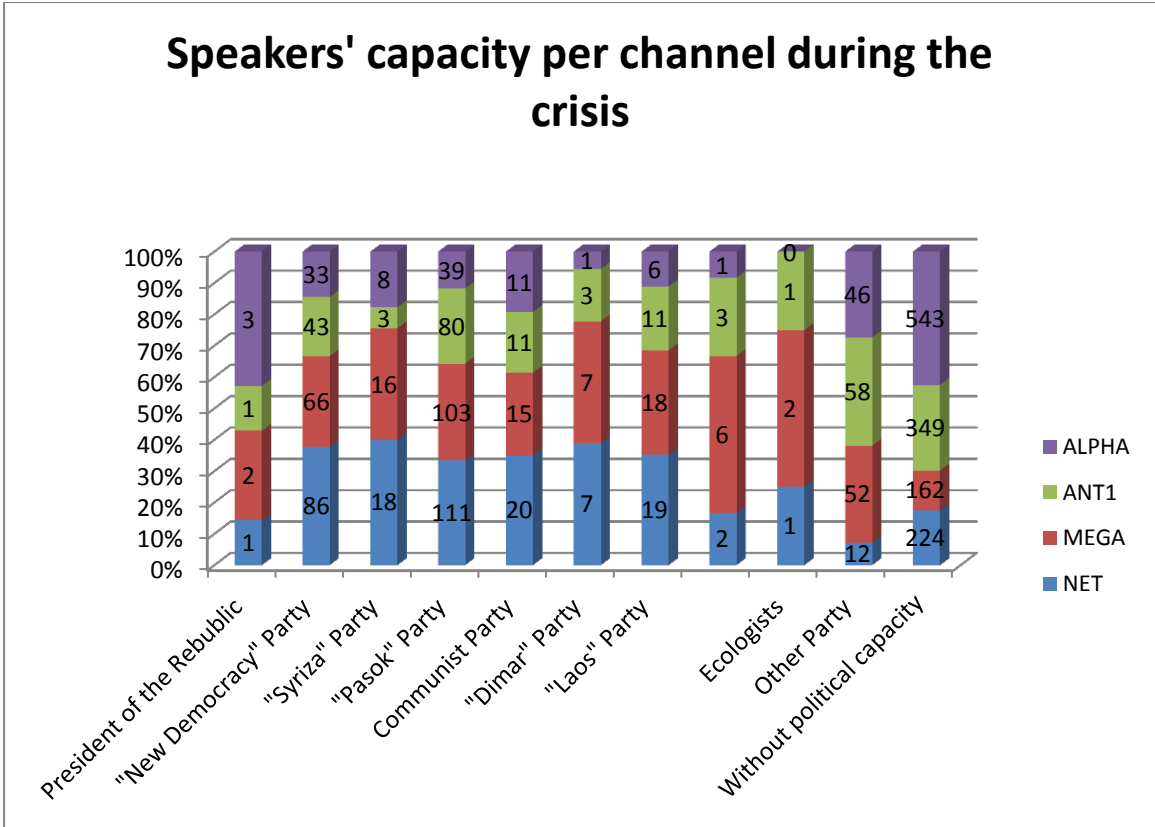
The study of people diversity in television newscasts is highly interesting, because through the study of people diversity, more accurate conclusions can be drawn regarding viewpoint diversity, beyond the range of news topics. If the researcher examines only the topics covered by the news, the conclusions of the research will not be complete. This is because news coverage, on its own, does not necessarily present an opinion and as a consequence, recording the diversity of the range of topics is a significantly challenging matter. However, when it is combined with the study of people diversity, the conclusions regarding viewpoint diversity are better supported and confirmed. In the following tables, people diversity is presented in detail, with regard to the channels and time periods under examination.

In the following tables, the degree of diversity is depicted with regard to the representatives of political parties and other groups, before and during the economic crisis.



Graph 6. 4: In this graph the representation of political parties or groups per channel is depicted, in the time period before the crisis. Here, the vertical column, as in the case of Graph 6.3. shows the total time to view rates. As 100% is the total time that covers all the channels which are shown in the graphic in the exam time.

Before the crisis, the political party that was given the most coverage is “New Democracy” and it is quite interesting that this tendency is to be found in all four channels under examination. More specifically, during this period, a representative of the “New Democracy” party appeared on public television 144 times, 125 times on MEGA, 49 on ANT1 and 53 times on ALPHA. The representatives of the “Pasok” party follow, but significantly less than “New Democracy.



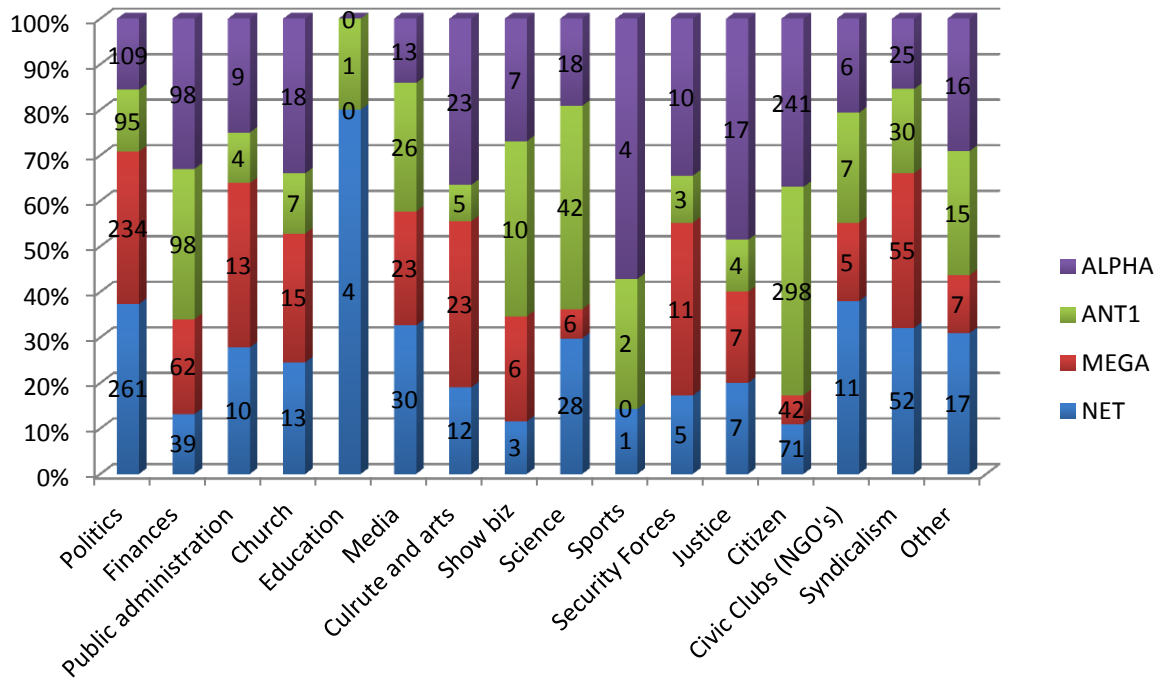
Graph 6. 5: In this graph the representation of political parties or groups per channel is depicted, in the time period during the crisis. The vertical column shows the total time in view of such margins makes the channels during the exam time.

During the economic crisis, there was a shift from “Pasok” and “New Democracy” in terms of coverage. More specifically, a representative of “Pasok” appeared 111 times on public television, 103 times on MEGA, 80 times on ANT1 and 39 times on ALPHA, while “New Democracy” was represented 86 times on public television, 66 times on MEGA, 43 times on ANT1 and 33 times on ALPHA.

Comparing both periods, it is shown that there is a low degree of people diversity, with regard to political representation. A preference by the channels for two parties, namely “New Democracy” and “Pasok”, is recorded. Furthermore, there is an equal representation, in both periods, of two left-wing parties, namely the Communist party and “Syriza”, but they have limited appearances. The low degree of people diversity is also shown through the rare presentation of other political groups, such as independent MPs or politicians or the “Ecologists” party.



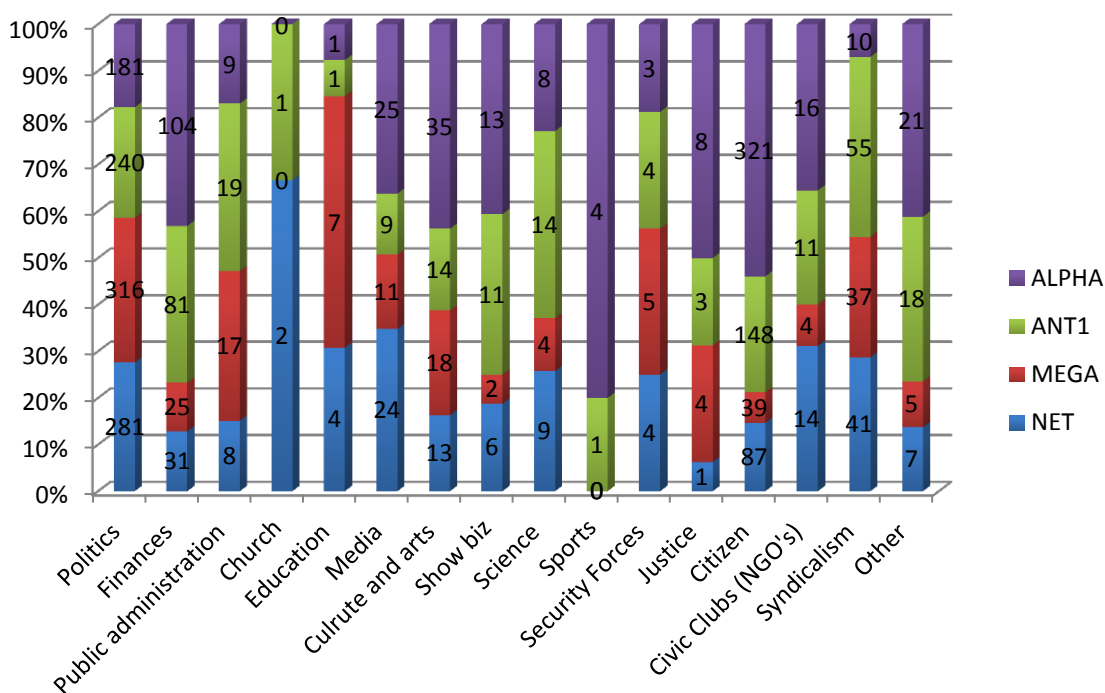
## Speakers' broadcasting percentages per channel before crisis



Graph 6. 6: In this graph people diversity is recorded with regard to the role of speakers, in the time period before the crisis. The vertical column shows the total time in view of such margins makes the channels during the exam time.

Another important point that needs to be studied in the context of people diversity is – apart from the representatives of political parties – the capacity of people that appear on the news. As is shown in the above graph, politicians are in first place, followed by citizens, who appear in reports that take place in public areas, where they are asked their opinion on various issues. As discussed, news bulletins in Greece have a more anthropocentric structure. The category of citizens is followed by financial analysts.

## Speakers' broadcasting percentages per channel during the crisis

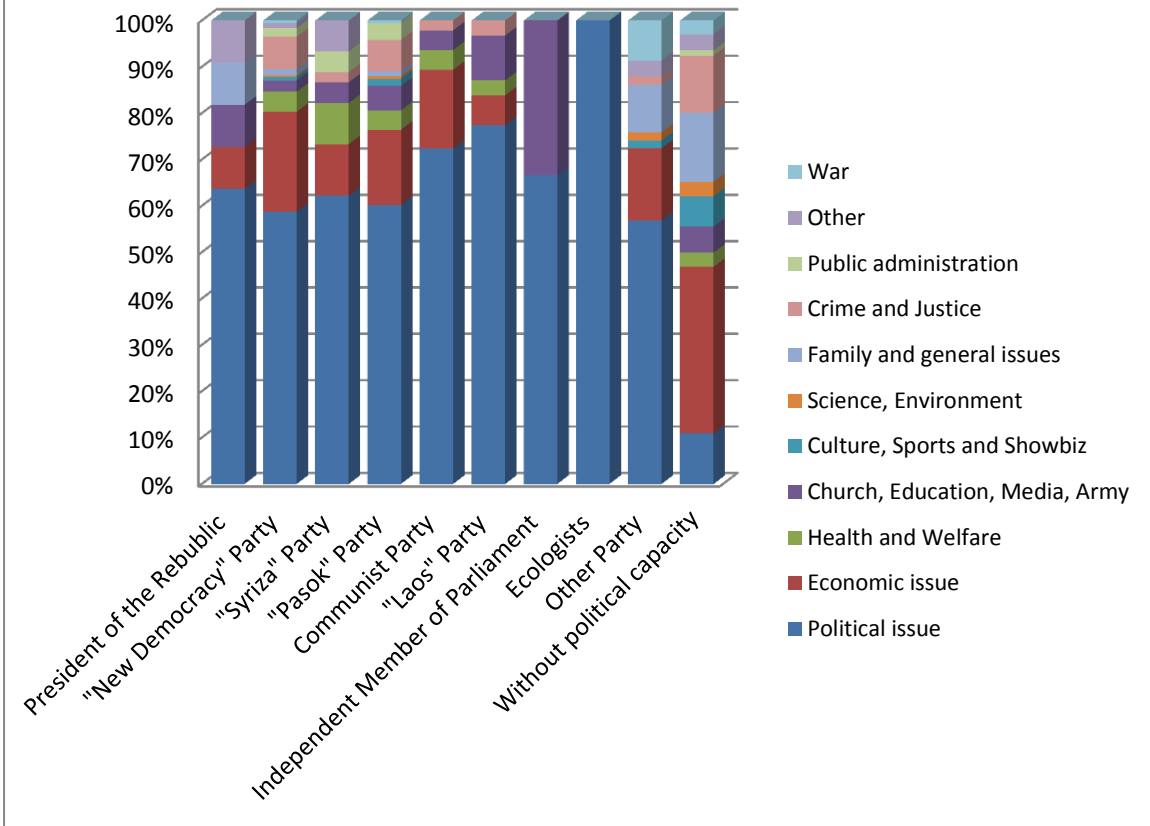


Graph 6. 7: In this graph people diversity is recorded with regard to the capacity of speakers, in the time period during the crisis. The vertical column shows the total time in view of such margins makes the channels during the exam time.

There is an interesting finding with regard to the capacity of speakers during the economic crisis: Politicians appeared 281 times on public television, 316 times on MEGA, 240 times on ANT1 and 181 times on ALPHA. On ALPHA, however, politicians is not the first category, since the category of citizens appears 321 times.

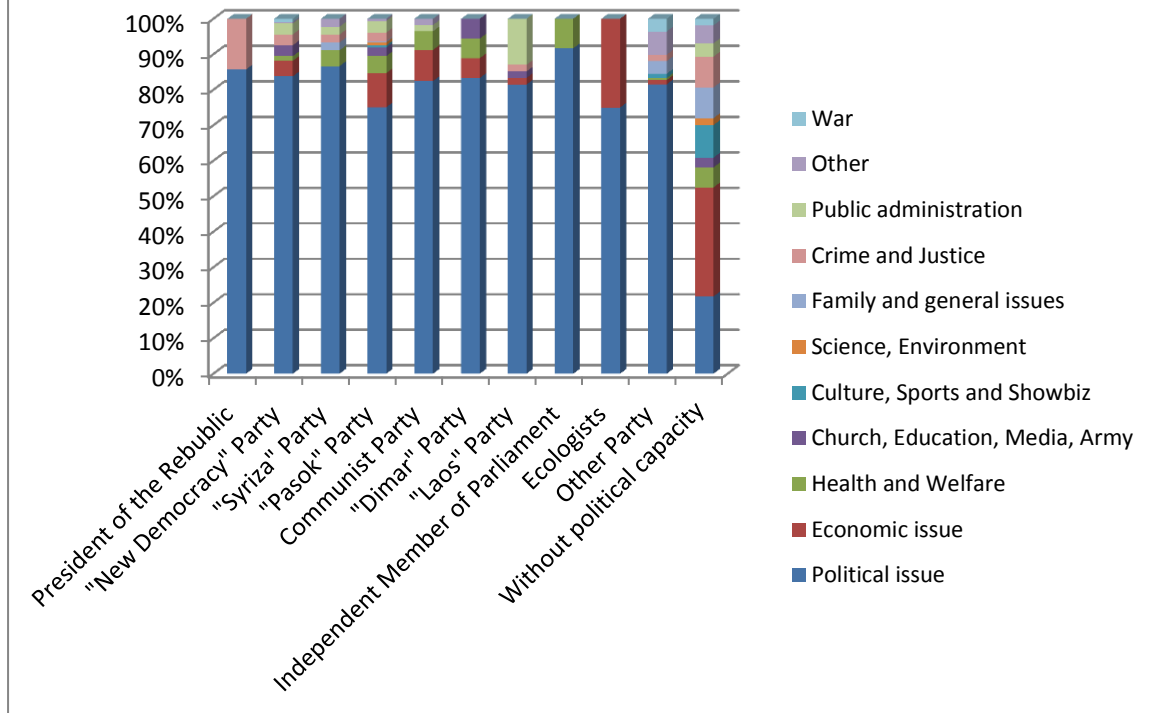
In the following four graphs, a dual factor is presented: The relation between the speaker's capacity and the subject of the discussion. The first two graphs present the connection only between politicians and the topic which is discussed, while the other two include several speaker categories. These relations are highly significant, given that viewpoint diversity primarily concerns the content of expression and opinion, even though, as will be discussed below, opinion cannot be quantitatively recorded.

## Relation of political representative to the topic of discussion before the crisis



Graph 6. 8: In this graph, the relation of political representatives to the topic which is discussed is presented, before the economic crisis. The vertical column shows the variable frequency as a percentage in relation to the total share of time. For example, the President of the Republic was placed on political issues at a ratio of 60% of the total time of shares under examination channel.

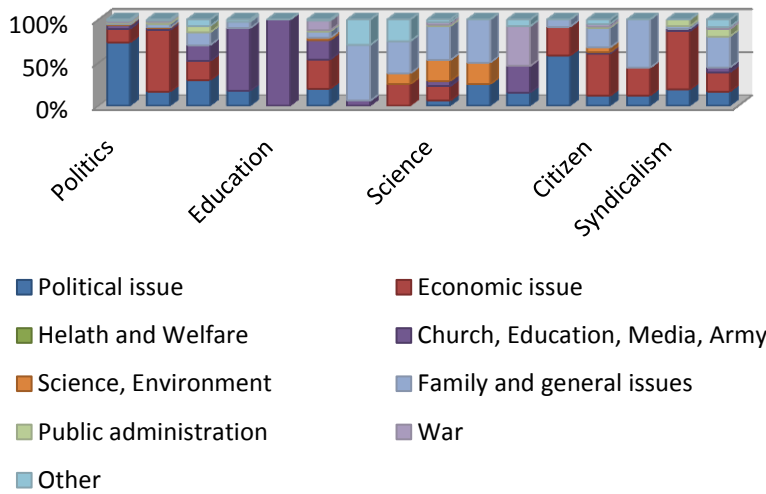
## Relation of political representative to the topic of discussion during the crisis



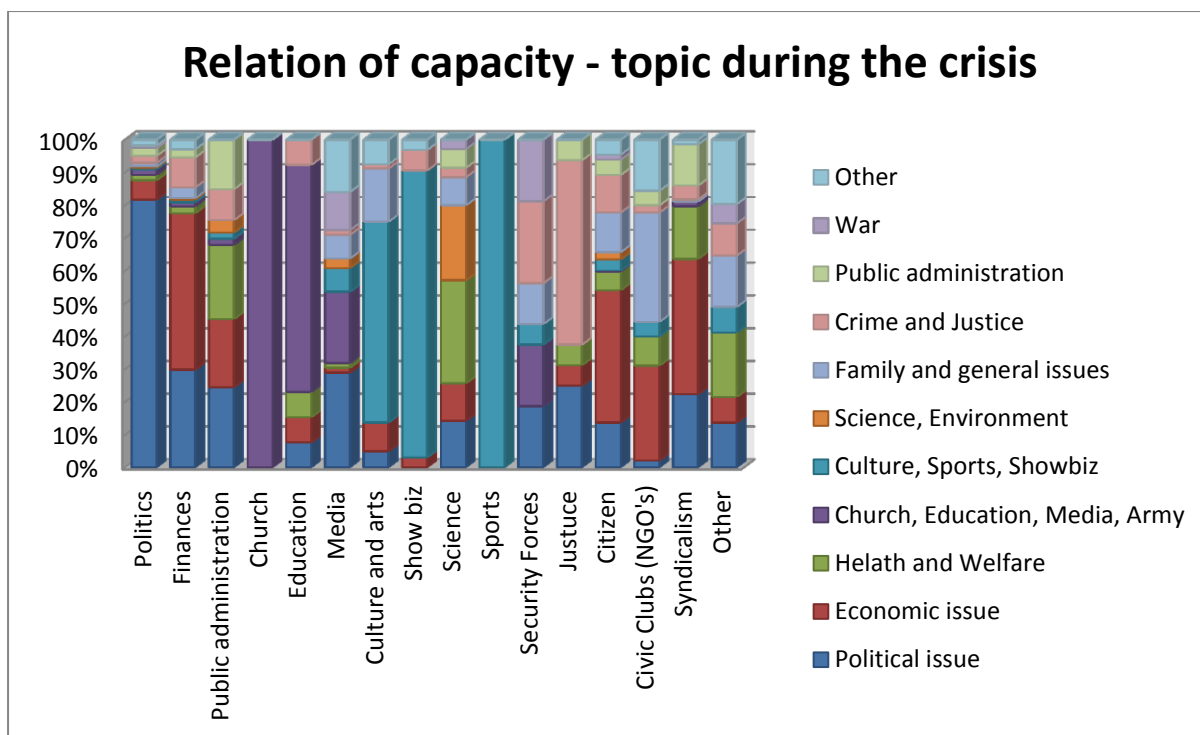
Graph 6. 9: In this graph, the relation of political representatives to the topic which is discussed is presented, during the economic crisis. The vertical column shows the variable frequency in proportion to the total share of time as in the previous graph.

It is observed that, in both periods, politicians address a very limited range of topics in news bulletins, and primarily political issues. There is a tendency among politicians to refer to financial matters, which, however, are incorporated within political discussions, as financial matters have political implications as well. From the above graphs, it could be established that there is a low degree of diversity with regard to the relationship between politicians and matters of discussion.

## Relation of capacity - topic before the crisis



Graph 6. 10: This graph presents the relation of the capacity of the speakers to the topic of discussion before the economic crisis. The categorization is more general and includes various fields. The vertical column shows the variable frequency as a percentage in relation to the total share of the time estimated to total 100%.



Graph 6. 11: This graph presents the relation of the capacity of the speakers to the topic of discussion during the economic crisis. The categorization is more general and includes various fields. The vertical column shows the variable frequency as a percentage in relation to the total share of the time estimated to total 100%.

Through the above analysis of people diversity, its various levels are clarified. In other words, the low degree of diversity with regard to political representation is depicted, since the frequent coverage of only two parties appears in contrast to the low or complete lack of broadcasting of other political parties or groups. On the other hand, apart from politicians, a higher degree of diversity of the capacity of speakers is observed. For instance, during the economic crisis, one would expect that financial analysts would compete with politicians in appearances. Nevertheless, the above graphs show a preference for the promotion of ordinary citizens. Therefore, when people diversity in news bulletins is examined, more variables should be combined, in order for people diversity to be horizontally assessed and not only on a single level. Clearly, this depends on the purposes of the researcher examining diversity.

Using the research question regarding people diversity and its application to main news bulletins that were studied in this subchapter, an empirical approach<sup>67</sup> is developed, which is based on three axes: a) political diversity, b) the capacity of the speakers and c) the association of the topics with the capacity of the speakers.

<sup>67</sup>Given that the specific focus of this study is the Greek case, it should be noted that for another country, the categorization of news topics should take into consideration its particular characteristics.

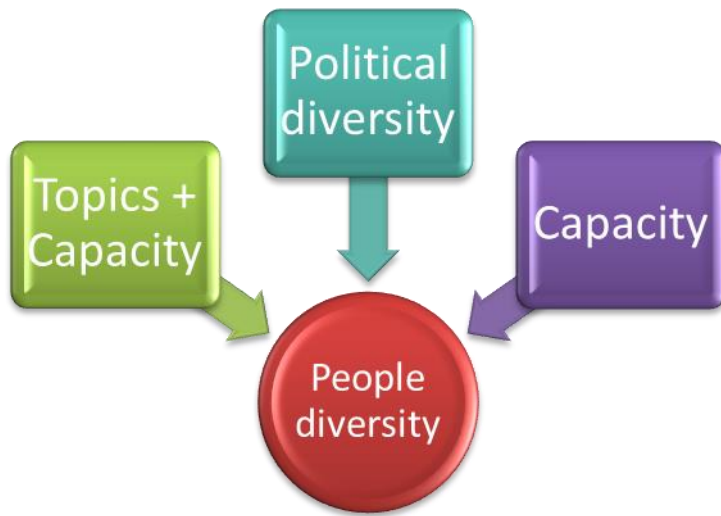


Diagram 6. 1: .In this diagram, the three elements that constitute people diversity are depicted. The assessment of people diversity along these axes is significant, because it presents a more complete view of the concept (author).

The element of political diversity concerns the diversity of the representation of political parties or groups, based on their broadcasting frequency. The empirical analysis showed considerable divergence in this form of diversity, which is an important index-factor for the assessment of people diversity in the news.<sup>68</sup>

The second axis, the capacity of the speakers, comprises all the speakers who appear – either as group representatives or as individuals – in newscasts, including politicians. This research in particular included the following categories: Politicians, financial analysts, public administrators, people related to the church, education, media, culture and arts, showbiz,<sup>69</sup> science, sports, security forces (e.g., policemen, fire fighters, etc.), justice, NGOs, trade unions, citizens and the general category “other”.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup>Bruhn Jensen (1990) conceptually approaches the political genre as follows: “The news audience is addressed as recipients of factual information about political life and economic matters. The specific relevance of this information for the audience, however, may be conceived in two different ways. On the one hand, the news text can be thought of as an account which reports particular political events and issues as a way of keeping the audience up to date as citizens and voters [...]. On the other hand, news may be seen as a resource for the audience in a rather more participatory form of democracy” (p.58). A methodological clarification should be provided here: Bruhn Jensen (1990) refers to “political genre” as a subcategory of news, while in this research, news is considered as a genre and political matters as one of its subgenre.

<sup>69</sup>This genre is incorporated into a wider philosophy of television, that of reality television. The genre of showbiz can essentially be classified into several categories, depending on what the researcher wishes to examine. Due to its general nature it can be listed under the general category of infotainment programmes.

<sup>70</sup>Claes de Vreese (2003) refers to the speakers on television newscasts as “actors”, who can appear in their personal capacity or as representatives of organizations, institutions, political parties, social bodies, etc.

Finally, the third element, namely the association of the topic discussed with the capacity of the speaker, addresses topic diversity in relation to the speaker's background. For instance, the category that presents a high degree of diversity regards citizens who deal with various topics, such as politics, the economy and social matters, which are mostly related to the institution of family.<sup>71</sup>

The significance of these factors lies in the fact that news as a genre is characterized as a process of internal diversity.<sup>72</sup> The concept of internal diversity in the news is used to indicate the complex, multi-levelled and unique composition of this genre. News by its nature incorporates various aspects of diversity. In this thesis, the three dimensions of a specific kind of diversity, viewpoint diversity, have been studied, namely thematic diversity, people diversity and the factor of time that is analysed below. The difference between news and other programming genres lies in exactly this point; that it is composed of multiple factors which determine the degree of internal diversity. Furthermore, in the first subchapter of this chapter, the emphasis placed by the channels on this genre was discussed, as well as the significance of the main newscast for the whole image of the channel. Apart from this, however, still in relation to the concept of people diversity, it comprises a set of elements. In other words, when people diversity is examined, a basic set of three dimensions should be accounted for: Who says what and in which capacity.

### **6.2.3. The factor of time in newscasts (time diversity)**

As discussed in the empirical chapter, the time variable plays an important role in the whole process of diversity assessment. Especially in the case of viewpoint diversity, time distribution can indicate the importance of certain topics, persons or political parties. In general, time indicates the subjects that the channels consider as being of high priority. The study of time combined with the study of people diversity essentially facilitates the understanding of the factors that influence the degree of viewpoint diversity. The factor of time could be defined as time diversity. Nonetheless, studying the variable of time is not a simple matter and certain sub questions should be set out in the research, for example, which temporal distribution the researcher wishes to examine and what comparisons will be made through this given temporal distribution. The study of time can also be applied in the case of

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<sup>71</sup>When the diversity of the representatives in newscasts is examined, the association of the speaker with the topic presented offers a more comprehensive image, since the capacity of a person does not necessarily indicate diversity of opinions, given that the opinion stems from the discussion.

<sup>72</sup>Here, the use of "internal diversity" should not be confused with "internal pluralism", a concept used in the introduction and other chapters of this research, which refers to a completely different matter.



people diversity, that is, one could examine the amount of time that is given to people when expressing their opinions. In this research, the time factor was applied to genre diversity as well. Evidently, in the case of genre diversity, the concept of time has an additional meaning, that of the distinction into programme time zones, therefore the interpretation of time in these two different cases should not be confused. In the following tables, a general approach to time is presented, with regard to political and non-political matters in the channels under examination.

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Politics</b>	<b>Non-politics news</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>NET</b>	40760 sec.	38289 sec.	79049 sec.
<b>MEGA</b>	50952 sec.	34895 sec.	85847 sec.
<b>ANT1</b>	28798 sec.	49406 sec.	78204 sec.
<b>ALPHA</b>	18425 sec.	55285 sec.	70110 sec.

Table 6. 1: In this table, the time each channel dedicates to politics and non-politics news is recorded, for the whole period that viewpoint diversity is examined.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Politics</b>	<b>Non-politics news</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Nov – Dec 2008 &amp; Feb – Mar 2009</b>	49410 sec.	101639 sec.	151049 sec.
<b>Nov – Dec 2011 &amp; Feb – Mar 2012</b>	89525 sec.	76236 sec.	165761 sec.

Table 6. 2: In this table, the total time dedicated to politics and non-politics news is recorded for the two time periods under examination.

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Politics</b>	<b>Non-politics news</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>NET before economic crisis</b>	12485sec.	25481 sec.	37966 sec.
<b>MEGA before economic crisis</b>	19357 sec.	20712 sec.	40069 sec.
<b>ANT1 before economic crisis</b>	8849 sec.	26923 sec.	35772 sec.
<b>ALPHA before economic crisis</b>	8719 sec.	28523 sec.	37242 sec.
<b>NET during economic crisis</b>	28275 sec.	12808 sec.	41083 sec.
<b>MEGA during economic crisis</b>	31595 sec.	14183 sec.	45778 sec.
<b>ANT1 during economic crisis</b>	19949 sec.	22483 sec.	42432 sec.
<b>ALPHA during economic crisis</b>	9706 sec.	26762 sec.	36468 sec.

Table 6. 3: Here, the time dedicated to politics and non-politics news is recorded, both per channel and time period.

### 6.3. Issues of the application of viewpoint diversity

The application of the study of viewpoint diversity differs from the study of other types of diversity that are studied in this thesis, namely genre diversity and source diversity. The key difference is that opinion – viewpoint – and consequently the degree of viewpoint diversity cannot be quantified. It cannot be quantitatively recorded, for example, by how many times an opinion is presented in a programme. Viewpoint on its own does not constitute a genre, not even a variable to assess. In the case of genre diversity, for example, programmes are classified into general programming categories and then into genres and in this way they can be quantified. On the contrary, viewpoint diversity deals with a subjective matter – opinion – which due to this subjectivity cannot be categorized.

In this research, viewpoint diversity is approached methodologically through certain variables, which basically estimate the tendencies of the preference of the channels towards groups that express specific views in the context of their social or political activity. The approach to people diversity, therefore, shows which people are presented to a greater or lesser extent in newscasts and where they come from; it does not account for what these people say. What is essentially studied in the context of viewpoint diversity, is not the actual opinion, but from where it originates, its source, because this is the measurable variable in this specific context.

As was previously mentioned, there are various problems with regard to the categorization of the news coverage. These problems also appear during the categorization of other programming genres. Firstly, news programmes are a general category, therefore, a researcher who wishes to examine such issues should specify them. Several genres are considered as being news programmes; one of them is news bulletins, which is the genre studied in this thesis. The question that arises here is whether viewpoint diversity can be approached through other genres besides from newscasts. Clearly, viewpoint diversity can be identified in other genres as well, provided that they are of a journalistic nature, that is, genres that are included in the category of news programmes.

Still focusing on categorization, the issue of conflict between journalistic genres and subgenres emerges. In a previous chapter, an example of this was discussed with regard to other genres. For instance, when the “unemployment” subgenre is discussed, how does the researcher ensure that unemployment does not appear in another topic which is incorporated

into the subgenre of fiscal policy? Therefore, from a methodological point of view, the issue is that during the recording and categorization process, it is possible to encounter topics that cannot be accurately classified, since they could belong to more than one genre or subgenre.

There are many reasons why news programmes are preferred for the study of viewpoint diversity. The most important is that news programmes include expressions of opinion and interpretations of current affairs and, in general, of issues that interest the public. Although the style and form of each news programming varies accordingly, all news programmes include viewpoint and interpretation to some extent. For main news bulletins this is more explicit, since they are structured in a specific manner and cover the prime-time zone. Moreover, in main newscasts, especially in Greece, the presence of people and group representatives is far more intense.

The study of diversity in journalistic coverage (agenda) does not constitute a factor by itself that can be used in the study of viewpoint diversity, because the news agenda does not automatically indicate the existence of the opinion within it. What is essentially examined is which topics are preferred, for instance, whether politics are presented more than finance.

Finally, the study of temporal distribution, as previously discussed, merely enhances the findings of the above two levels, namely the study of the news agenda and of people diversity. The study of time study by itself, unless combined with other variables, cannot lead to valid conclusions and consequently it may be useless. For instance, if by studying temporal distribution, a researcher concludes that a given channel offered more time to finance than another one, which dedicated more time to politics, this piece of information on its own does not provide us with useful results, since the importance of a news item depends on many additional factors, such as the positioning of this news item and the way in which it is presented. In any case, for a proper assessment of temporal distribution to be conducted, the process should be as analytical as it is possible. Time should be assessed, not only with regard to each category, but also on the basis of genres, in order for accurate conclusions to be drawn.

The next chapter deals with the empirical application of the study of source diversity to the Greek television market.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF SOURCE DIVERSITY IN GREEK TELEVISION**

In this chapter, the business relationship between production companies and channels is examined. As will be discussed below, during the period under examination, the production companies STUDIO ATA, ANOSI PRODUCTIONS, Television Companies – Peanias Studio, ON Productions and ENA Productions had a direct or indirect corporate relationship with television channels. The most important part of this chapter is the discussion of the connection between content and production companies and in particular the extent to which content development is affected by production, in other words, what the correlation is between genre diversity and source diversity.

More specifically, this chapter attempts to clarify whether a vertical concentration among television channels and production companies actually exists and if so, the extent to which it affects content diversity. To prove the existence of such a relation, it is necessary to study ownership relationships between television channels and production companies. Production companies constitute the “source”, they produce the content, and therefore content diversity is defined and governed by the diversity of television productions.

More specifically, this chapter – through the empirical study that will follow – attempts to analyse the correlation between source diversity and content diversity, which is the final degree of diversity of content output.

As specified in the fourth chapter, the research questions of this chapter focus on the clarification of the production market tendencies, the vertical concentration of the market, the participation of independent productions and the correlation with viewing ratings. The rationale behind these questions – in order to clarify them, as well as to highlight their significance with regard to the study of source diversity – is to attempt a quantitative analysis of production companies in correlation to television channels and the way in-house productions are affected. As will be shown below, the quantitative correlation between production companies and television channels is not a matter of basic mathematics. Every production company interacts in a different way with private television channels. In other words, the existence of source diversity, that is diversity at the production level, is a general issue that depends on various factors which are analysed in this chapter, through an empirical

analysis of the field. One of these factors, for instance, is the degree of independent productions, an issue that was theoretically approached in a previous chapter. It is also particularly interesting to establish a way in which the degree of vertical concentration between production companies and television channels could be examined. These tendencies are analysed in the following empirical study. Another significant element is the correlation between production companies, television channels and viewing ratings. The importance of this factor lies mostly in the fact that the degree of participation of production companies can be interpreted based on the viewing ratings their productions attain.

The information for the status of the ownership of television channels was taken from the National Radio and Television Council and their public archives related to the shareholder structure of TV channels. For production companies, finding relevant information was naturally more difficult, as on the one hand no information was available and on the other hand access to such data varies according to their activities and legal form. In order for the research to be as complete as possible, archives from the National Press Office were also studied that contained information about companies which existed during the period examined in this study. For cases where the data could not be collected from analogue records, the Internet was used to find digitized data.

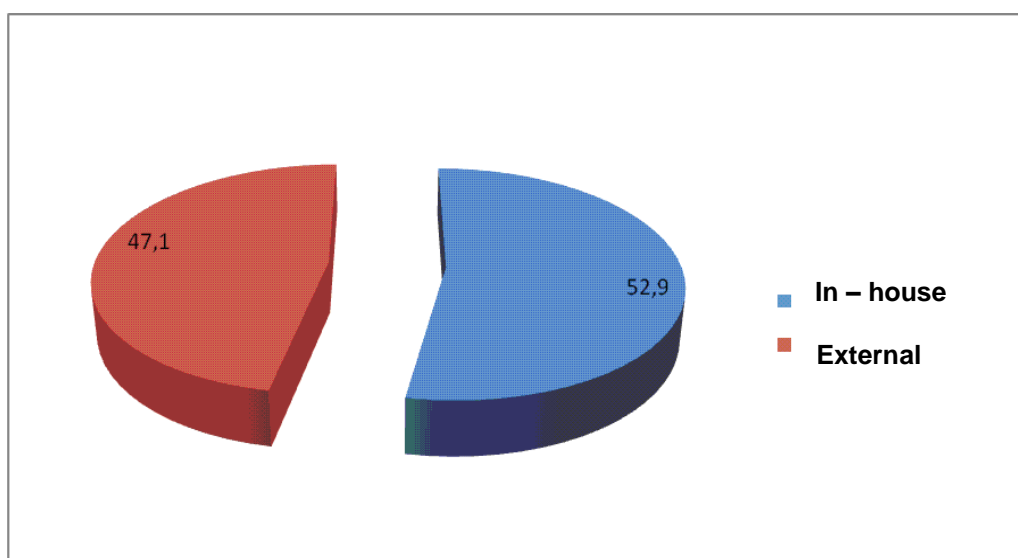
In most cases the searches were fruitful, as information was collected from most of the production companies. The fact that in few cases this was not possible does not significantly influence the conclusions of the research, as the information collected covers all the largest companies in the field, which produce most of the programmes broadcast, and also the total collection of information about all the companies irrespective of the size of the company refers to the overwhelming majority of the programmes broadcast. At the same time, in order to verify the information acquired, we attempted to gather information related to the business activities of mass media associations and their possible engagement with production companies. However, this research did not produce any information beyond that already gathered, largely proving that television networks did not engage with production companies beyond those in the cases already noted.

According to the analysis of the data collected, a total of six production companies are related to television networks through ownership. Particularly, the companies Studio ATA,<sup>73</sup> ANOSI PRODUCTIONS, Television Companies – Peanias Studio and ON Productions seem to be related through some MEGA Channel shareholders, while the last seems to be owned by both MEGA and STAR Channel. Furthermore, the ENA Productions Company seems to be owned by ANT1 Television Network, while Plus Productions Company seems to be owned by ALPHA Television Channel.

A more detailed analysis of co-operation and vertical concentration in television productions will be provided in the presentation of the results, although they will be expanded upon in the conclusions developed in the next chapter. Currently, it can only be stated that the companies mentioned produce a total of 31 out of 72 externally produced programs for the period under examination, a percentage of about 43% of all programmes.

For this study, information was gathered from 136 different programmes, in-house and external productions, from the nine Greek channels which broadcast nationally. Seventy-two of those programmes are external productions (52.9% of the total), while 64 are in-house productions (47.1% of total, Figure 1). These programmes belong to the channels' schedules and were broadcast between 18.00 and 00.00, as explained above.

**In-house or external production**



<sup>73</sup>STUDIO ATA has produced some of the most memorable and celebrated television series, successful extravagant live variety shows and internationally well-known reality & TV games shows in Greek television history. Source; <http://www.studioata.gr/eng/page.aspx> [Accessed: March 2010].

Chart 7. 1: The split of in-house and external programmes.

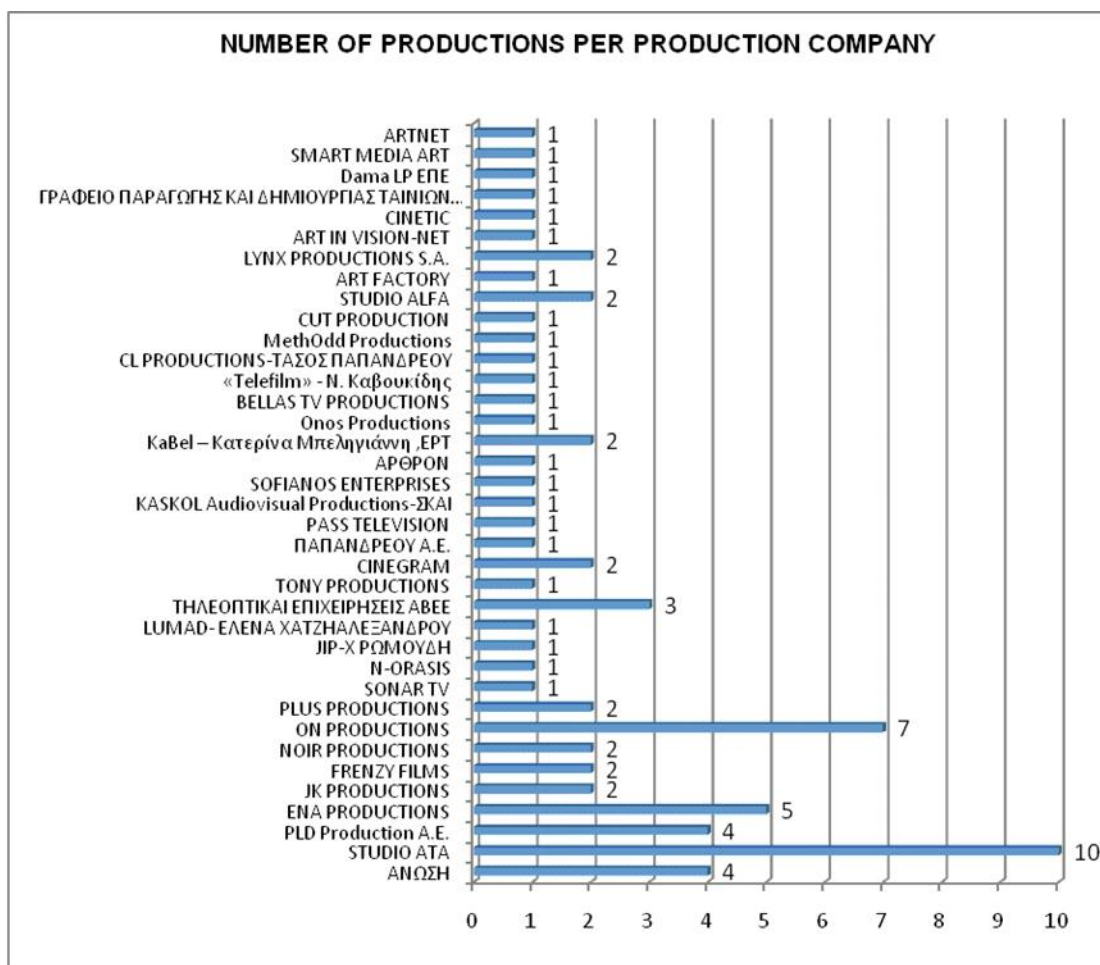
The 72 external productions come from 37 different production companies, but, as shown by the pie chart above, two of them do not participate equally in the production procedure of the programmes broadcast. The majority of the productions come from Studio ATA, as ten productions belong to this company (13.9% of all the external productions), and then ON Productions Company follows with seven productions (9.7%), then ENA Productions with five productions (6.95%) and PLD and Anosi, both with four productions (percentage 5.5%). Then, the Television Enterprises SA<sup>74</sup> follows with three productions (4.2%) and Lynx Productions, Studio Alfa, KaBel, Cinegram, Plus Productions,<sup>75</sup> Noir Productions, Frenzy Films and JK Productions with two productions (2.8%). Finally, 23 companies follow, with one production each in the category of television programming already studied.

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<sup>74</sup>Television Enterprises S.A. (TVE) is one of the most successful independent television production companies and television studios in Greece. It has an outstanding reputation for producing innovative, high quality and popular programmes for the Greek and international markets. Television Enterprises and the Paiania Studios, located in the outskirts of Athens, were established in 1975, and were the first colour TV studios in Greece. Their operations started in 1977, with two fully-equipped studios, along with several audio and editing suites, that were producing TV programmes for 20 different TV channels throughout Europe and the Middle East. The success of TVE is not only due to its state-of-the art high tech equipment or experienced personnel. Television Enterprises, with its many years of experience, offers full support in all phases of production – from the script to the final programme. Television Enterprises produces a broad range of programme genres including lifestyle, talk shows, game shows, sitcoms, crime series and social dramas, in addition to documentaries and films. Source: <http://www.tve.gr/About.aspx>

<sup>75</sup>Plus Productions, a television and cinematographic production company was founded in 2004, and in a short time succeeded in becoming one of the biggest audiovisual production companies in Greece. The excellent combination of technology, creativity and celerity are some of the main features of the company. The continuous upgrading of its infrastructure, the professionalism of the experienced crews and the breadth of the production services, form the public image of a company that understands and can correspond to the high requirements of an avant-garde production industry. The company owns equipment for ON-AIR Broadcasting, maintains in-house post production facilities for the creation of advertisements, TV talent shows and cinematography films. It has produced different kinds of programmes, including daily - weekly and talent shows, on behalf of the biggest TV networks in Greece. Consult: [http://www.plusproductions.gr/profile\\_en.html](http://www.plusproductions.gr/profile_en.html) [Accessed: March 2010].

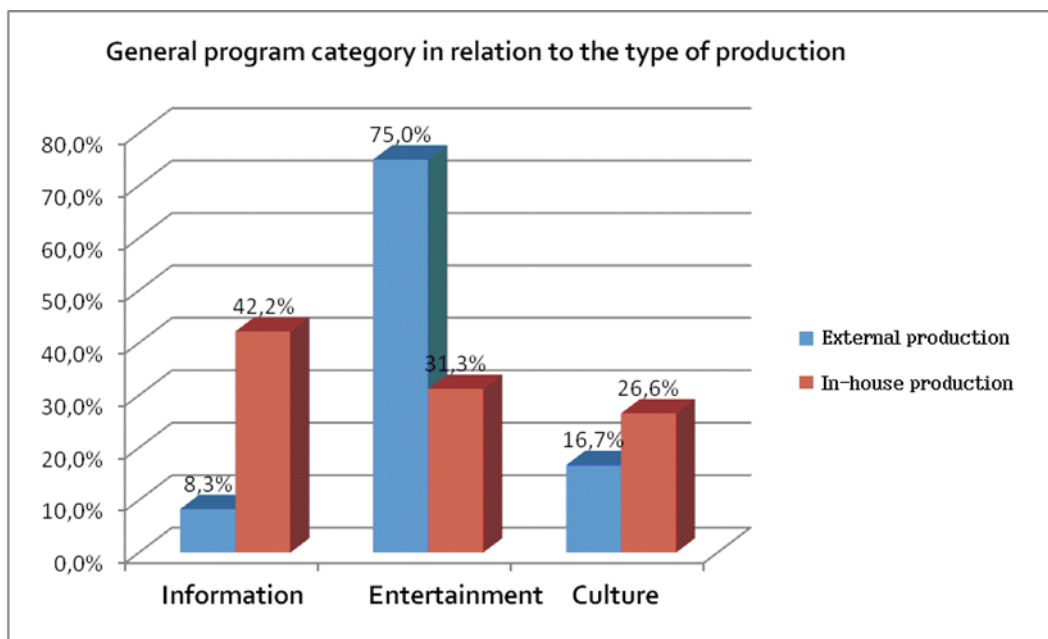




Graph 7. 1: Quantitative analysis of productions per television production company. More specifically, the graph presents the number of productions produced by production companies during the period of source diversity under examination: 24.11-7.12.2008 - 23.2- 8.3.2009.

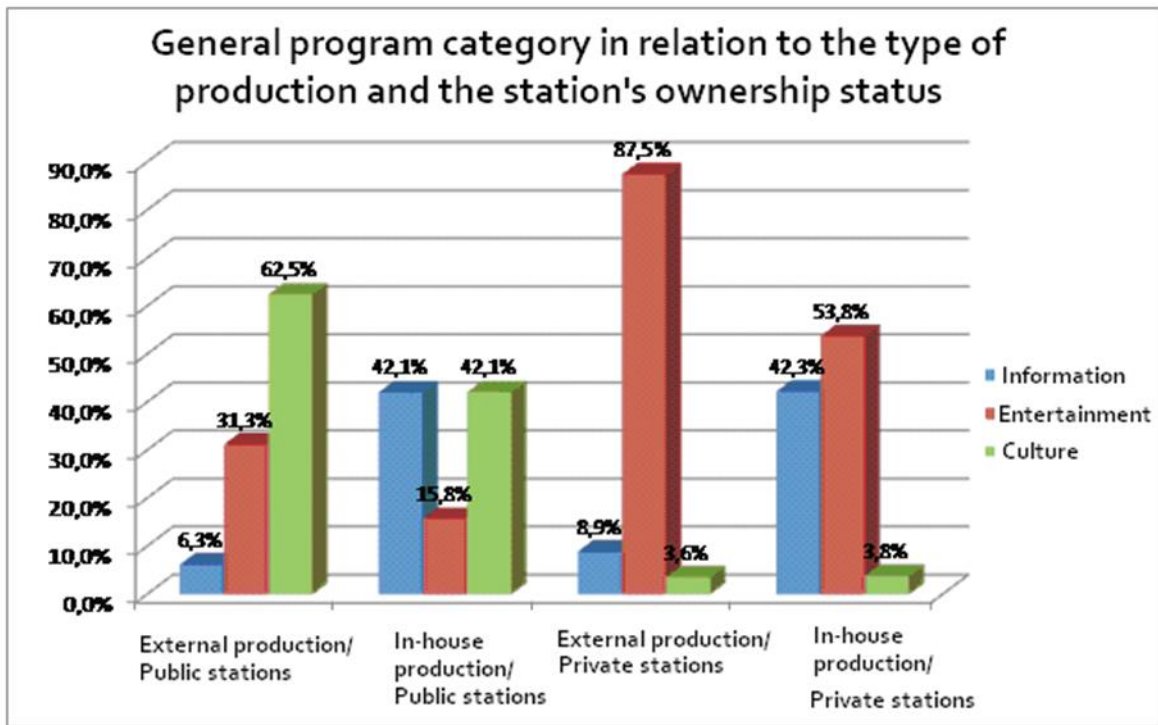
One significant finding comes from the classification of the programmes broadcast (in-house and external productions) into genres, according to the general categories already defined (information, entertainment, culture). A cross-check of the variables shows a statistically important relation between the programme's general category and whether the specific programming is an in-house or external production (chi-square test  $p$ -value < 0.05). Consequently, whether a specific programming is an information, entertainment or culture-orientated production is also influenced by whether it is an in-house or external production. This is also reflected in the percentages presented in the figure. For in-house productions, information comes first, but only marginally ahead of entertainment and culture (42.2%, 31.3% and 26.6%, respectively), while external production entertainment programmes come

first, with 75%, compared with 16.7% for culture programmes and 8.3% for information programmes (Graph 7.2).



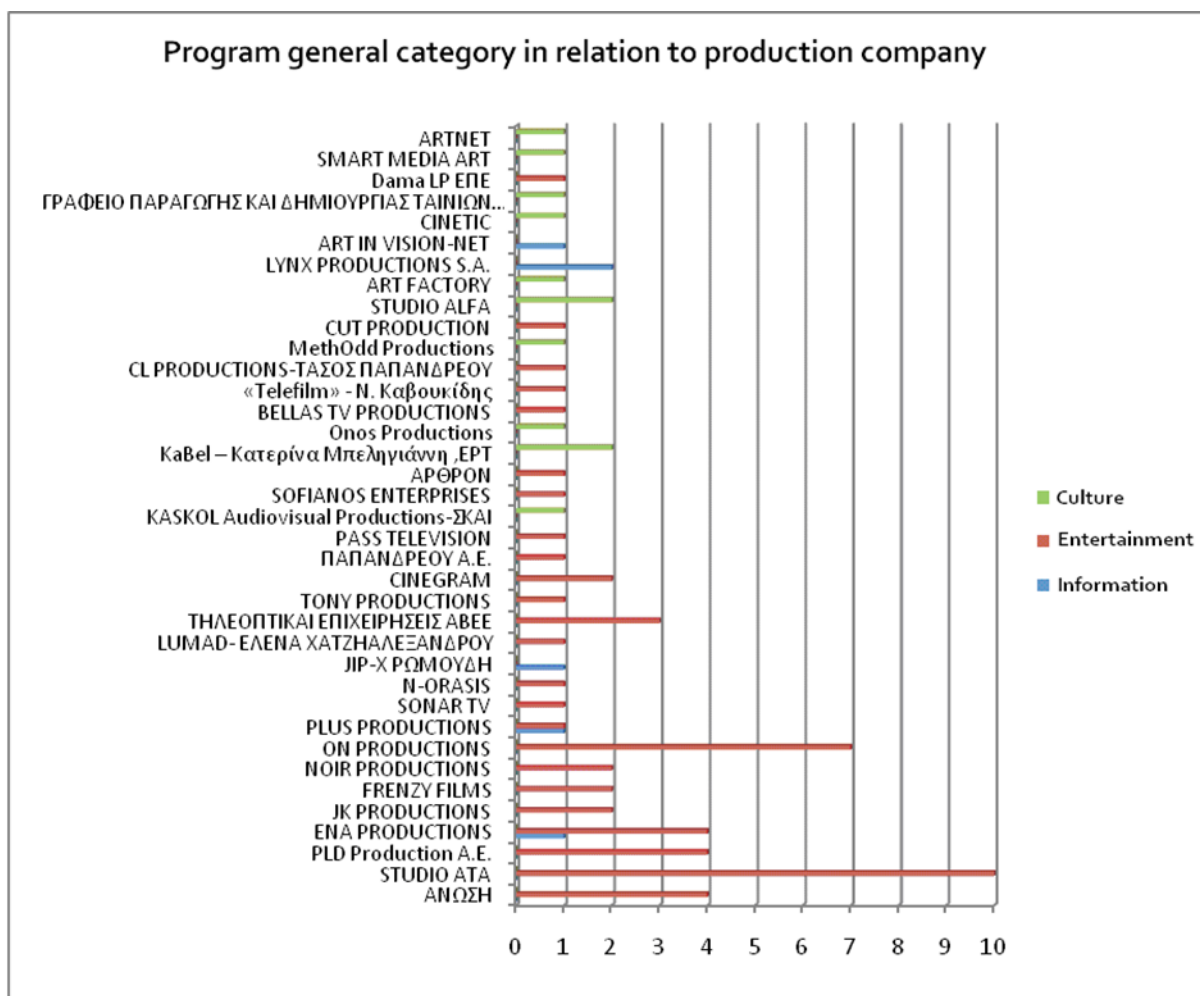
Graph 7. 2: Comparative analysis of in-house and external productions per programming category. The categorization described in subchapter 4.4.2 is used.

A further analysis of the two variables (programming general category and type of production) after the integration of a third variable, related to the status of the ownership of the television channel, shows clearly that private channels prefer entertainment programmes, both as in-house and external productions. On the other hand, public channels prefer the external production of culture programmes, while, regarding their internal productions, there is a “balance” between information and culture programmes. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 4, entertainment programmes predominate in private channels, both as external productions (87.5%) and as in-house productions (53.8%). Public channels give more importance to culture, as shown by the fact that the relative programmes take first place regarding external productions (62.5%), while as in-house productions they share first place with information programmes (42.1% for both of the categories) (Graph 7.3).



Graph 7. 3: Comparative analysis of in-house productions and external productions on public and private television.

That external productions are predominantly entertainment productions is also confirmed by the relation between general programming categories and production companies. An obvious conclusion is that the production companies that produce most of the productions shown on the television programmes already studied predominantly produce entertainment programmes. On the other hand, companies with less productions (one or two) seem to be active – or at least partially active – in the field of culture or information. At the same time, almost every company – except Plus and ENA Productions – “specialize” in either culture, entertainment or information. This argument has its limitations when referring to the smaller production companies – for a separation between the small and large production companies, see the figure below – and particularly those that offer one only programme. It is not possible to state that they are specialized in a particular genre, since we have no more information available (this statement also applies to companies that offer two programmes) (Graph7.4).



Graph 7. 4: General analysis of programming categories of culture, entertainment and information per television production company.

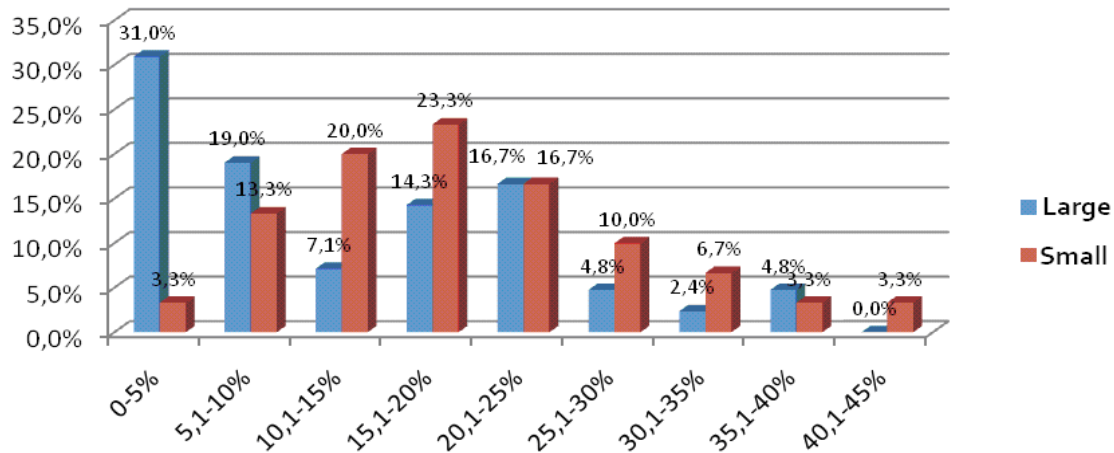
In order to continue with our presentation of the results, it is necessary to classify the production companies into large and small ventures according to the number of productions each company offers. Large companies “offer” more than 5% of the total number of 72 external productions. This shows a tendency for the production of television programmes to be concentrated to a small number of companies, as the total number of production companies is 37 and if the distribution of the production of the 72 programmes was equal, the proportion would be 1.95% of productions per company. Five production companies (StudioATA, On Productions, Ena Productions, PLD and Anosis) produce more than 40% of the total number of external productions (30 out of 72 productions, 41.7%). This shows a clear concentration with regard to the participation of production companies in television programming.

In order to find out whether the fact that production is concentrated in the five large companies has an influence upon the distribution of the television audience, the relationship between television audience rates and the size of the production company was examined. A statistically significant relation was found ( $p < 0.05$ ), showing that a programme's audience rates<sup>76</sup> are influenced by whether the programming is made by a small or a large production company. With regard to this observation, there is some sort of interaction found. It would not be incorrect to suggest that large companies focus on producing programmes which aim to attain high audience rates. Naturally, in order for such a conclusion to be drawn, other parameters should also be taken into consideration, such as the channel that broadcasts the programme, its content, its genre, the hours during which it is broadcast, as well as a series of similar factors. Generally, the above observation seems to apply in a wide range of cases. Graph 7.5 shows that 50% of the programmes produced by small enterprises scored audience rates no higher than 10% (31% of the companies scored 0-5% and 19% of the companies scored 5-10%). Conversely, 50% of the programmes produced by large companies scored audience rates of about 15-30% (23.3% of the programmes score 15.1-20%, 16.7% score 20.1-25% and 10% score 25.1-30%).

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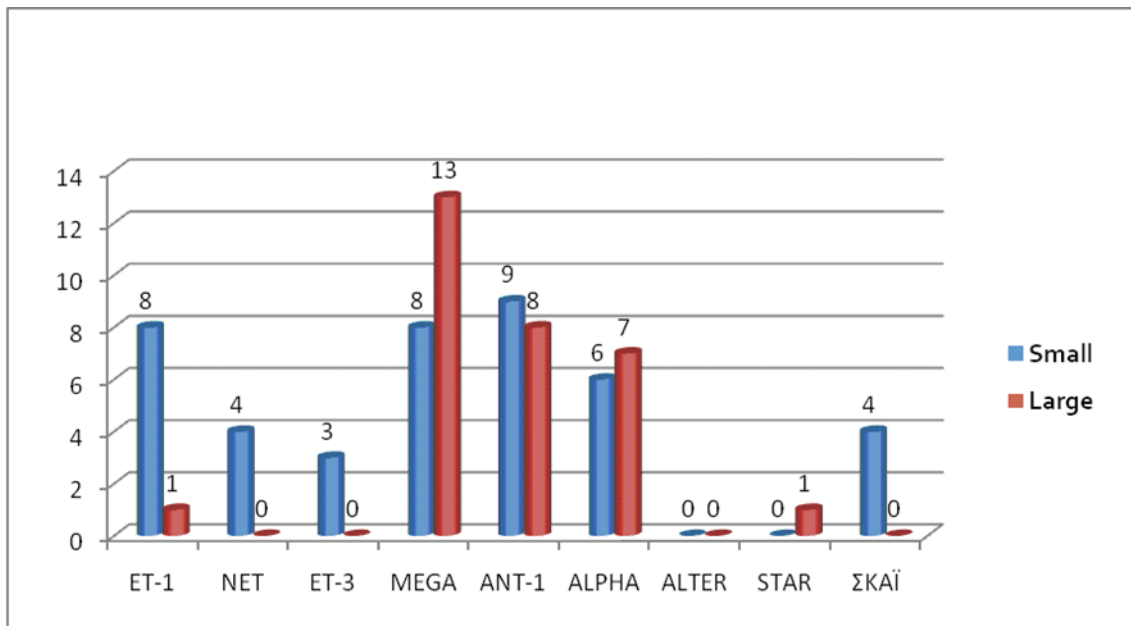
<sup>76</sup>The audience ratings for the productions were collected by the Television Audience Measurement Company, AGB Hellas.

### Audience rates scored by external productions in relation to the size of the production company



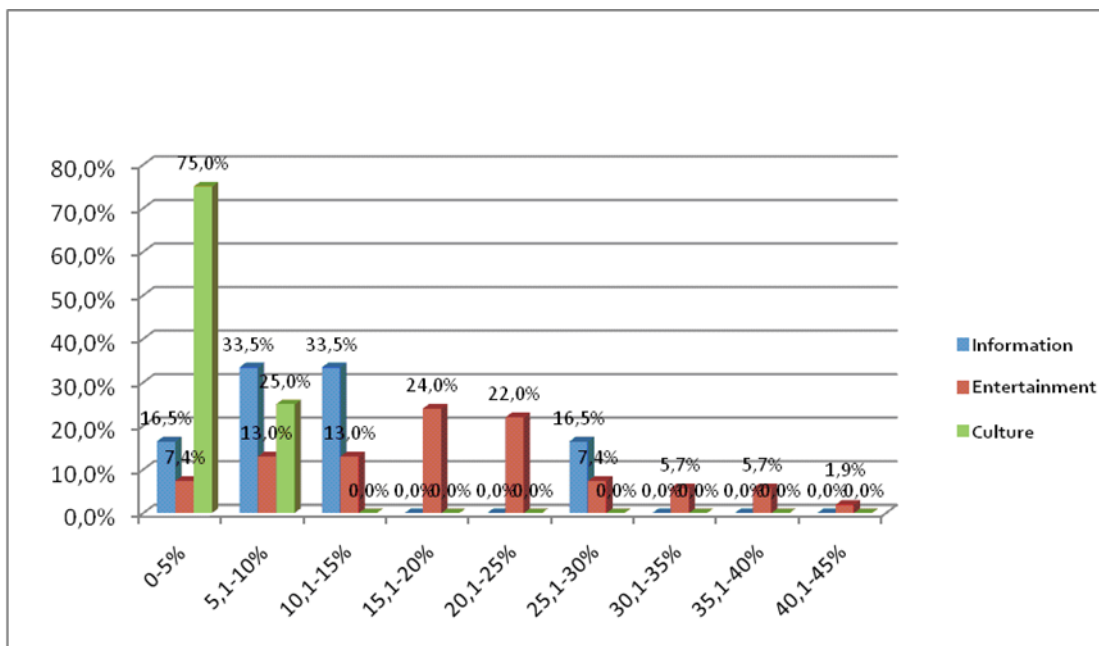
Graph 7. 5: Comparative graph that illustrates the television viewing ratings for external productions.

At the same time, the large production companies seem to cooperate almost exclusively (there is only one exception) with private television channels, whereas small companies almost exclusively supply programmes externally to public television channels (Graph 7.6). This figure shows how external productions are distributed to specific channels. Private channels MEGA and ANT1 seem to have had most of the external productions during the period studied (21 and 17, respectively), followed by ALPHA with 13 productions. Following these are ET-1 with nine productions, NET and SKY with four, ET-3 with three and STAR with one only production. ALTER, for the hours studied (18.00-24.00), broadcast no external productions. This figure actually shows there to be fewer external productions that are entertainment programmes (Figure 3), as the large production companies which specialize in the production of such programmes (Figure 5) cooperate almost exclusively with private channels. Although the large companies produce about 41.7% of the entire production output, this particular rate increases by 10 percent (51.7%) for private channels and the production of their programmes, according to whether these programmes have been produced by a small or a large production company (Graph7.7).



Graph 7. 6: Comparative analysis of the external productions of channels considering the figures for the production companies.

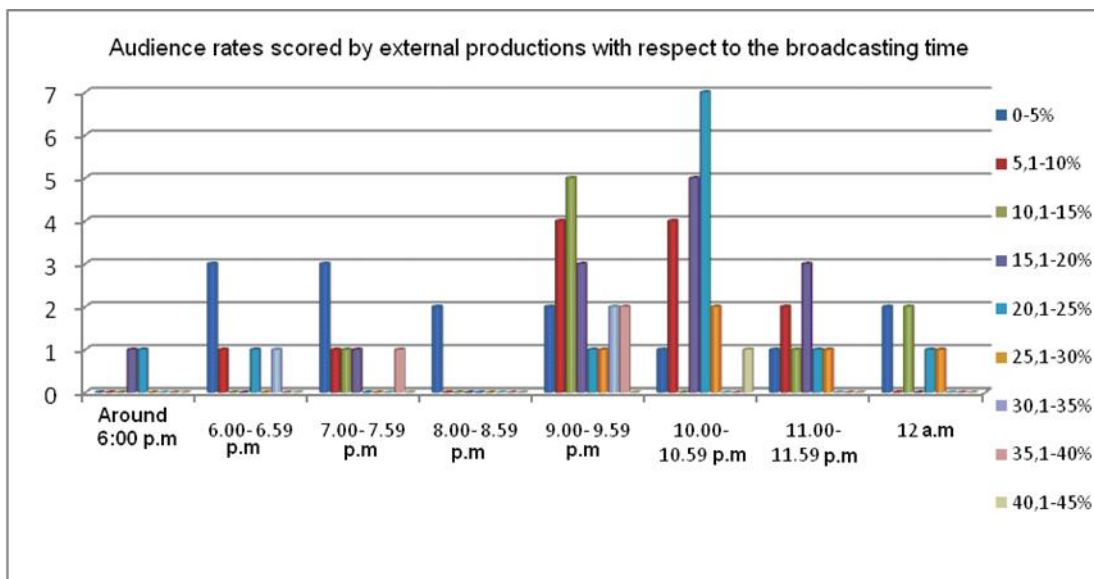
With regard to the audience rates scored by different types of external productions, entertainment also plays the role of the “protagonist” here, as shown by Figures 5 and 6. Since large production companies focus almost exclusively on entertainment and score high audience rates, entertainment also takes first place in the audience ratings. As shown by Figure 8, external productions categorized as culture-orientated generally score low audience ratings (75% of the programmes score 0-5% and 25% score 5.1-10%). External information-based productions seem to score slightly higher audience rates, as five out of six programmes (83.5%) may score up to 10.1-15% of the audience viewing share. On the other hand, 66.7% of the information programmes generally score audience rates higher than 15%, whereas 80% of the programmes score audience rates of 10% and above. The statistical importance of the relation between the general category and viewing share is also proved by the value of the statistical test used ( $pvalue < 0.05$ ) (Graph 7.7).



Graph 7. 7: Comparative analysis of external productions by viewing figures for programming categories.

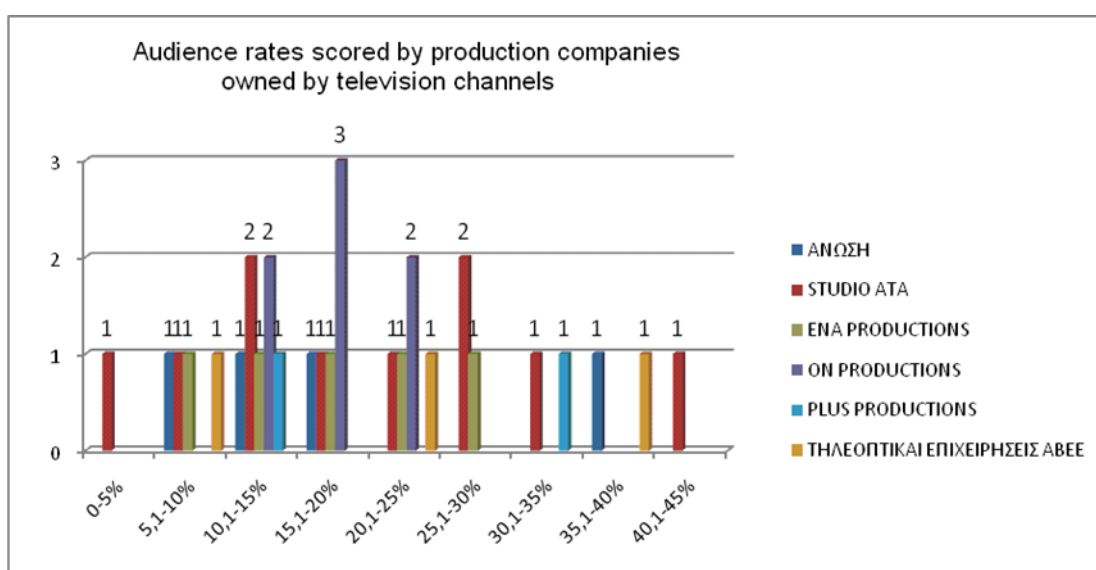
One of the reasons why external entertainment productions score high audience rates is the time at which they are broadcast. As shown by Graph 7.8, external productions are usually broadcast between 9.00 and 9.59 p.m., 10 and 10.59 p.m. and in some cases, though fewer, 11 and 11.59 p.m. During that period, higher audience rates are noticed, as between 9 and 9.59 p.m. a total of 14 productions scored audience rates higher than 10%, between 10 & 10.59, a total of 15 productions scored audience rates higher than 15% and between 11 & 11.59 six productions scored audience rates higher than 10%. Almost half of the external productions (35/72) broadcast during that period score audience rates as high as 10% at least, which proves there is a larger television audience. On the other hand, during the period between 6:00 p.m. until even after 8:00 p.m. only 17 external productions are broadcast, eight (47%) of which score audience rates of about 5% and below.





Graph 7. 8: Comparative graph illustrating television viewing figures for external productions with relation to their broadcasting time.

Returning to the issue of production companies owned by channels, and to fully evaluate television viewing share, television audience rates scored by the programmes produced by those companies were examined. As shown in Graph 7.9, 19 out of 31 (61.3%) score audience rates higher than 15%, while almost every company (except ENA Productions) produces a programme which scores audience rates higher than 30%.



Graph 7. 9: The quota of television production companies owned by television channels.

These graphs indicate that the companies are owned (completely or partially) by channels, resulting in a privileged cooperation between the company and the channel participating in the company's directorate, as the majority of the programmes produced are broadcast by the channel owners. MEGA receives the largest proportion of programmes produced by "sister" companies Anosis (two out of four productions), Studio ATA (five out of 10 productions), Television Enterprises (two out of three) and ON Productions, which only produces for MEGA (five productions) and STAR (one production), as it is connected to both television networks. ENA Productions, which acts on behalf of ANT1, produces programmes only for the channel already mentioned and, finally, Plus Productions "gives" two productions to its brother ALPHA and one to ANT1. Generally, the percentage of programmes destined for channels that own the production companies is about 71% (22 productions out of 31) (Chart 7.2.).

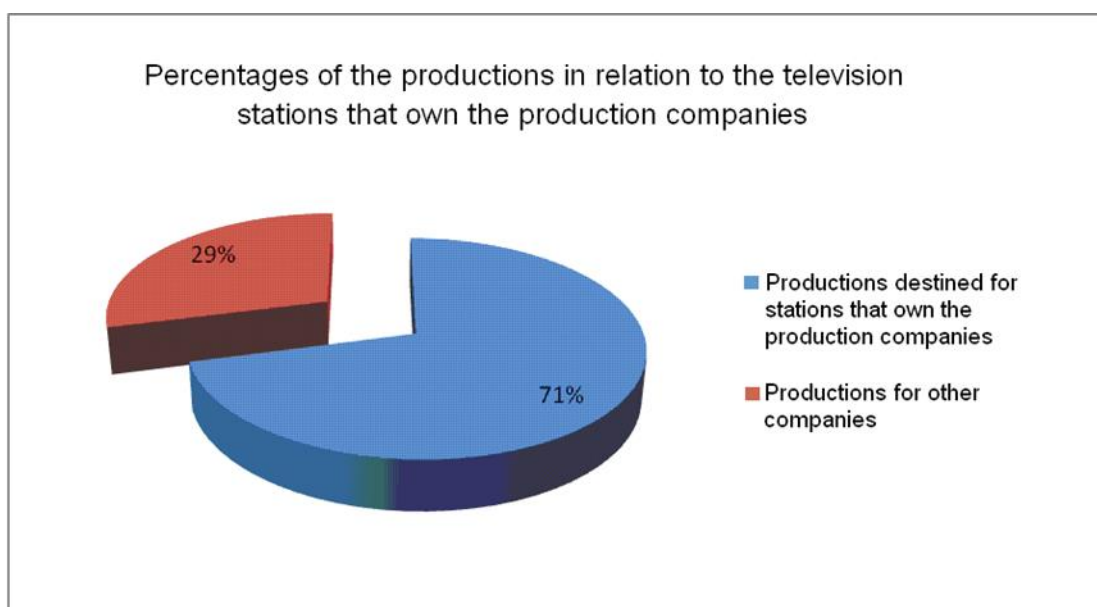
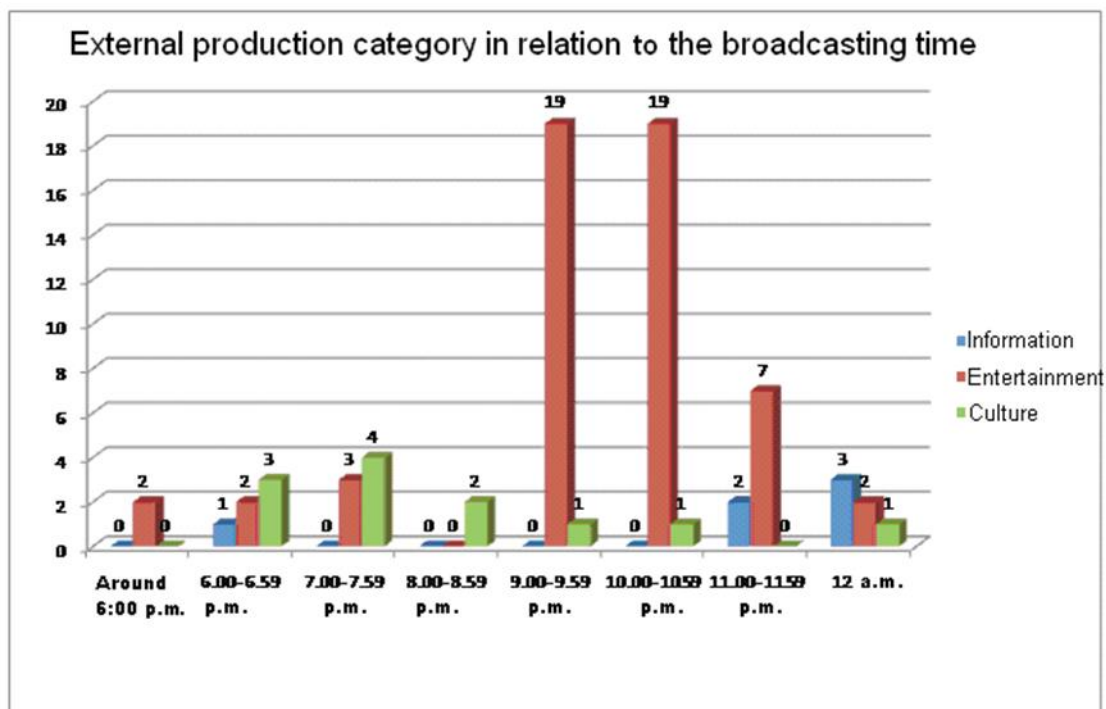


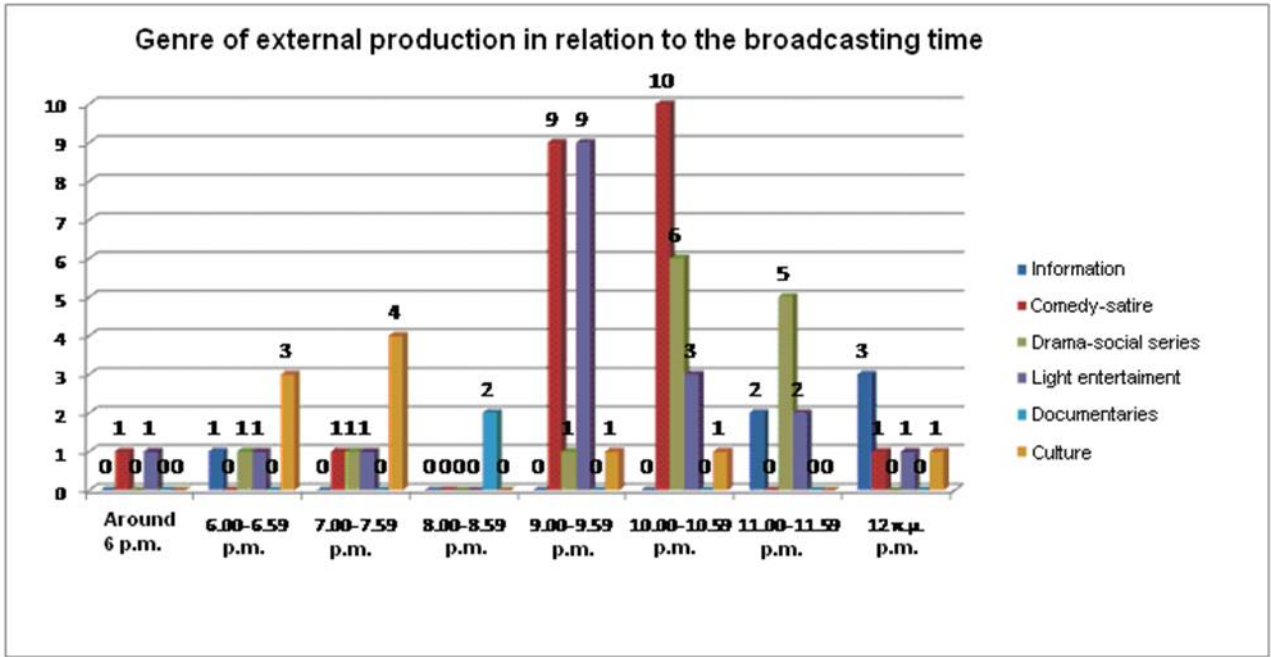
Chart 7. 2: The quota of productions in relation to television channels that own the production companies. More specifically, this pie chart shows the percentage of the productions that come from production companies that are shareholders in television channels and the percentage of productions made by independent production companies.

Because of an increased “demand” for programmes, television channels “answer” by almost exclusively broadcasting entertainment programmes (comedies and drama series), and for this reason the specific hours at which the programmes start (from 9 p.m. to nearly 12 a.m.) are the only hours during which the majority of programmes broadcast are entertainment. The relation between these two variables (broadcasting time and the programme’s general category), as shown by the figure, is statistically important, a fact also proved by the value of the statistical test already used ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Graph 7.10).



Graph 7. 10: External productions in relation to broadcasting times. More specifically, this graph reflects how the external productions are distributed throughout broadcasting time

A further examination of the relation between programming genre and broadcasting time is given by Graph 7.10 as from 9 p.m. to 12 p.m. the predominance of entertainment programmes involves a large number of comedies and satirical series, which take first place during the hours 9-9.59 (nine programmes) and 10-10.59 (10 programmes). Also, dramas and social series (a sub category of entertainment) predominate during 11-11.59 with five programmes, though they move to second place during the 10-10.59 slot with six programmes. The “predominance” of entertainment output during these hours is accompanied by light entertainment programmes, which are found in the first place – together with comedies – for the time segment 9-9.59 (nine programmes) and in third place during the time segment 10-10.59 with three programmes. Documentaries – though they usually belong to the category of “expensive” productions – are broadcast either before nine (two productions), or after 11 (five productions).



Graph 7. 11: Comparative analysis of external productions assessed by programming genres, in relation to their broadcasting time or broadcasting slot.

In all the cases of television production examined, there are no international co-productions or instances of cooperation between productions companies, a common practice in Europe.

The main question to be answered from the above data is to what extent source diversity affects content diversity. The first point that could provide an initial answer to that question is the business relationship between production companies and television channels. As illustrated above, the majority of productions are conducted by companies that belong to or have a corporate relationship with television channels (71%) in contrast to the productions by independent companies (29%). It is therefore established that there is a preference on the part of channels towards specific directions, which can also affect the financial aspect of productions. Clearly, a production by a company that belongs to the channel will be less expensive than a production by an independent company, which will have higher labour costs. Financial matters such as these probably influence the channels' decisions; they prefer, for example, expensive productions, such as reality shows, that have, however, lower labour costs. Furthermore, monitoring during the production process is direct and constant, if the production company is associated with the channel. There is a stable data flow from the channel to the production company, regarding each and every level, such as the choice of

people, the style and concept of the programme, graphics, and stage scenery, which eventually determine the final outcome of the production. It is thus observed that channels prefer to fully control the production, especially when the cost is significantly high. Finally, another important point which should be incorporated into this discussion is the financial difficulties, in particular the economic crisis in Greece, which has greatly affected the field of television, and the degree to which they have influenced content diversity. The following chapter deals with this issue and analyses the data in comparison to the analysis in this chapter.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: TODAY'S CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of source diversity, using the previous chapter as the basis for the comparison. In the methodology chapter, several thoughts and research questions, concerning the repetition of the study, were mentioned. As will be shown in the following discussion, financial rearrangements in the market have also affected the production of television content in Greece.

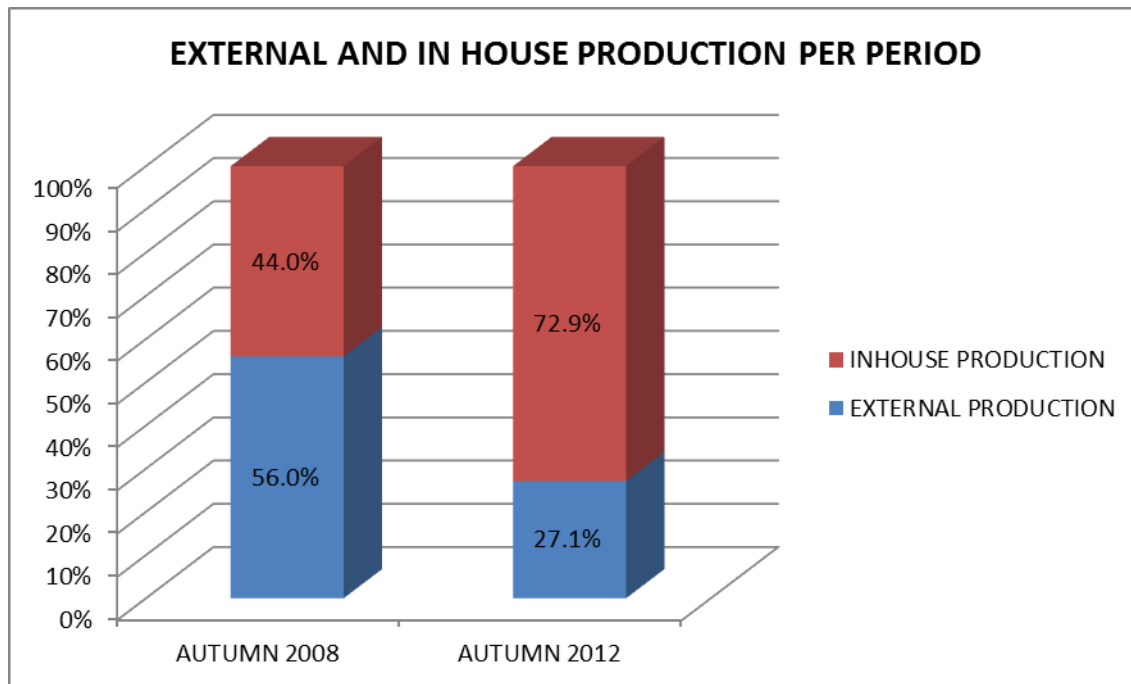
### 8.1. Analysis of the follow-up study's findings

The analysis of the data collected in the second study shows that six production companies have ownership relations with a television network. In particular, the production companies STUDIO ATA, ANOSI PRODUCTIONS, Television Companies – Peanias Studio and ON Productions have a direct or indirect corporate relationship with some of the co-owners of MEGA Channel, while the latter production company has an ownership relation to STAR Channel, as well as with MEGA channel. Nonetheless, it does not appear to have created a production for any channel. ENA Productions has ownership relations with ANT1 network, but it is faced with serious financial challenges and for the current television season is essentially, like ON Productions, inactive, without any television productions. Finally, Plus Productions has ownership relations with ALPHA channel. Therefore, out of the six companies that have ownership relations to a channel, only four participated in television programmes during the period under examination in 2012.

A broader analysis, with regard to the collaboration and consequently vertical concentration in the field of television productions, will follow in the discussion of the findings and primarily in the conclusions, analysed in the next subchapter. Indicatively, it should be mentioned that the afore-mentioned active companies produced five out of the 19 externally produced programmes, 26.3% of the programmes, in the period under examination. In the autumn of 2008, the percentage was 41% (23 out of 56 programmes produced by six companies). Therefore, one initial observation that can be made is that the productions by these companies have decreased, both as a percentage of the total external productions and as a cardinal number, in comparison to the autumn of 2008.

For the purposes of this research, relevant information was recorded for 70 different shows produced in-house and externally on the eight afore-mentioned channels with national coverage (fourth chapter). Of these shows, 19 are external (27.1%), while 51 are in-house

productions (percentage 72.9%). These percentages differ greatly from those of the same period in 2008 (graph 8.1). Moreover, there is a decrease of 30% in the total number of productions (in-house and externals) since in the same period in 2008, the recorded shows were 100. These shows are included in the channels' programming and were broadcast between 6 p.m. and 12 a.m., as it was previously mentioned.

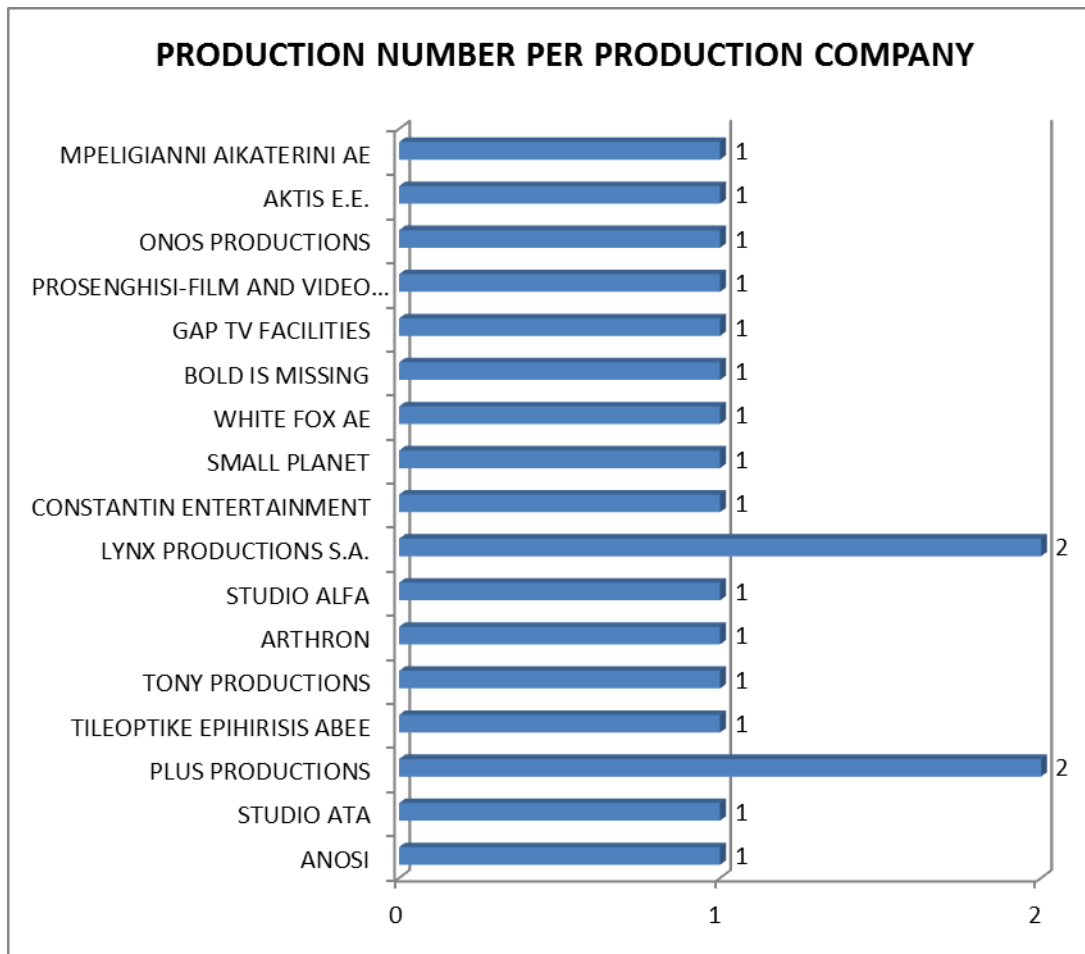


Graph 8. 1: Comparison of external and in-house productions during autumn 2008 and autumn 2012. It is shown that the external productions have decreased significantly. Specifically, the time period that is shown on this graph (as mentioned in the methodological chapter) is the last week of November and the first week of December (24.11-7.12.2008) and 11 to 25 November 2012, respectively. These time periods represent the total annual programming because this is the start of the new television season and there are no substantial changes during the year.

The 19 external productions come from a total of 17 different production companies, which, as shown in graph 8.2, participate almost equally in the production process. Only Lynx and Plus Productions produce two programmes, while the rest of the companies produce one programme. The obvious decline of external productions has eliminated the distinction between small and big production companies. This observation is based on the number of programmes that appear in the same time zone as in the autumn of 2008.<sup>77</sup>

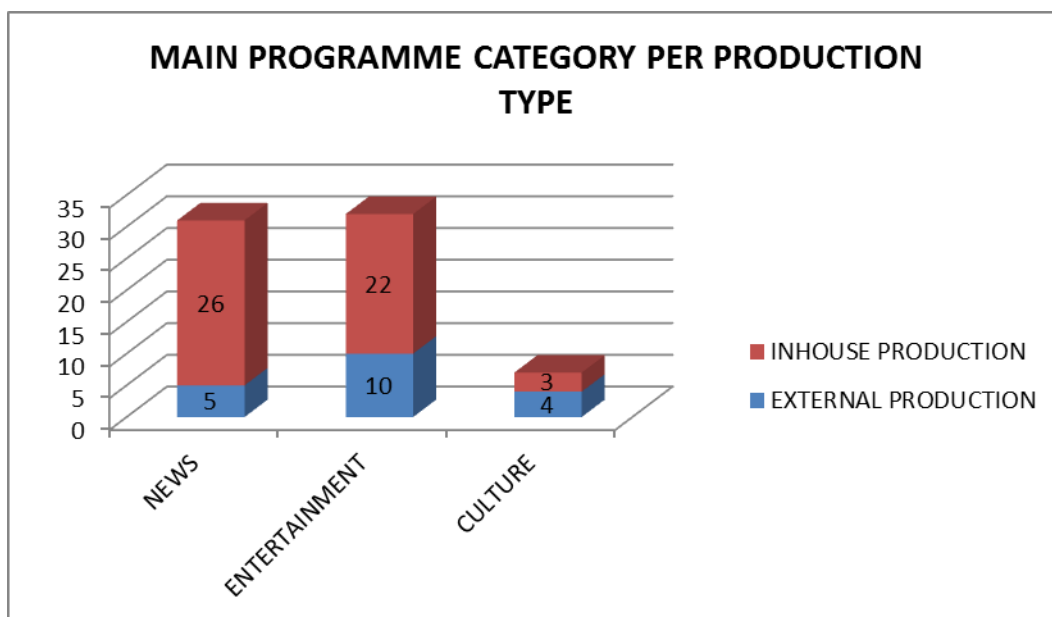
<sup>77</sup> Then, of the total amount of companies, on productions had seven programmes, Studio ATA and Ena Productions had five programmes each and Anosi and PLDPProduction had four programmes each.





Graph 8. 2: Number of productions per production company. More specifically, this graph shows the activity of production companies based on the number of their productions (the last week of November and the first week of December (24.11-7.12.2008)).

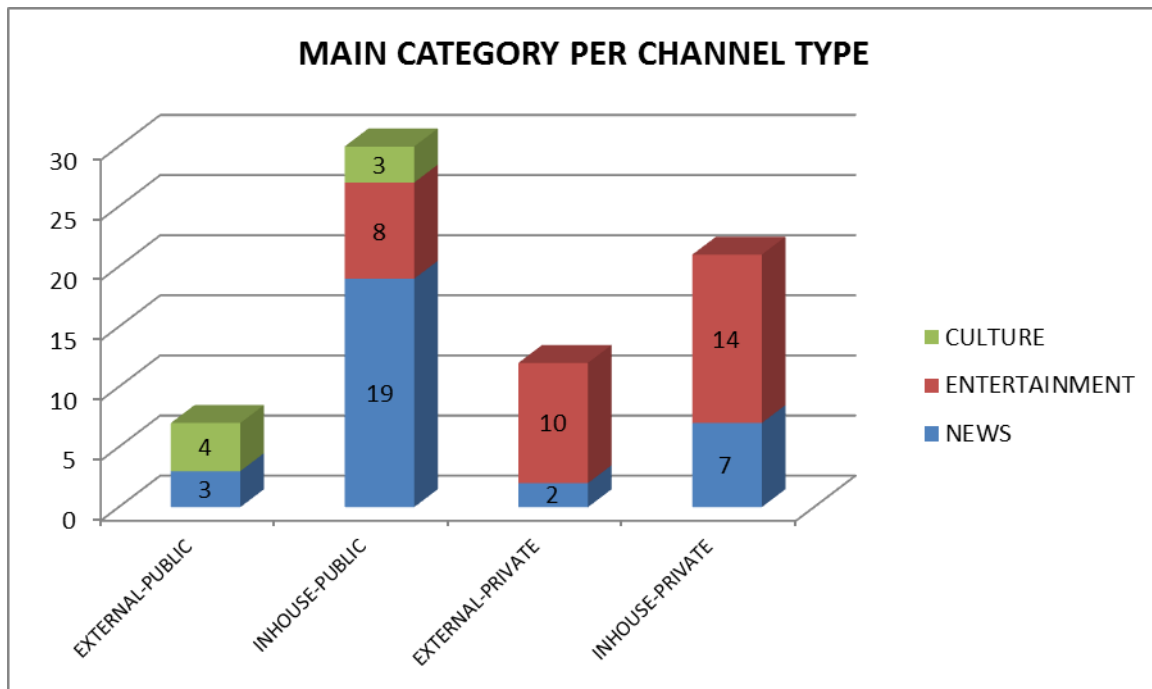
With regard to the distribution of the genres of shows (in-house and external), according to the general categories, previously defined (informational, entertainment, cultural), there is a clear tendency on the part of external productions towards entertainment (10 out of 19 productions). On the contrary, for in-house productions, information shows are more frequent, even slightly, than entertainment (26 versus 22 productions). Lastly, cultural shows constitute a smaller part, both of in-house and external productions (graph 8.3).



Graph 8. 3: Main programming category per production type. The three categories, namely news, entertainment and culture, are presented according to their production type, external or in-house.

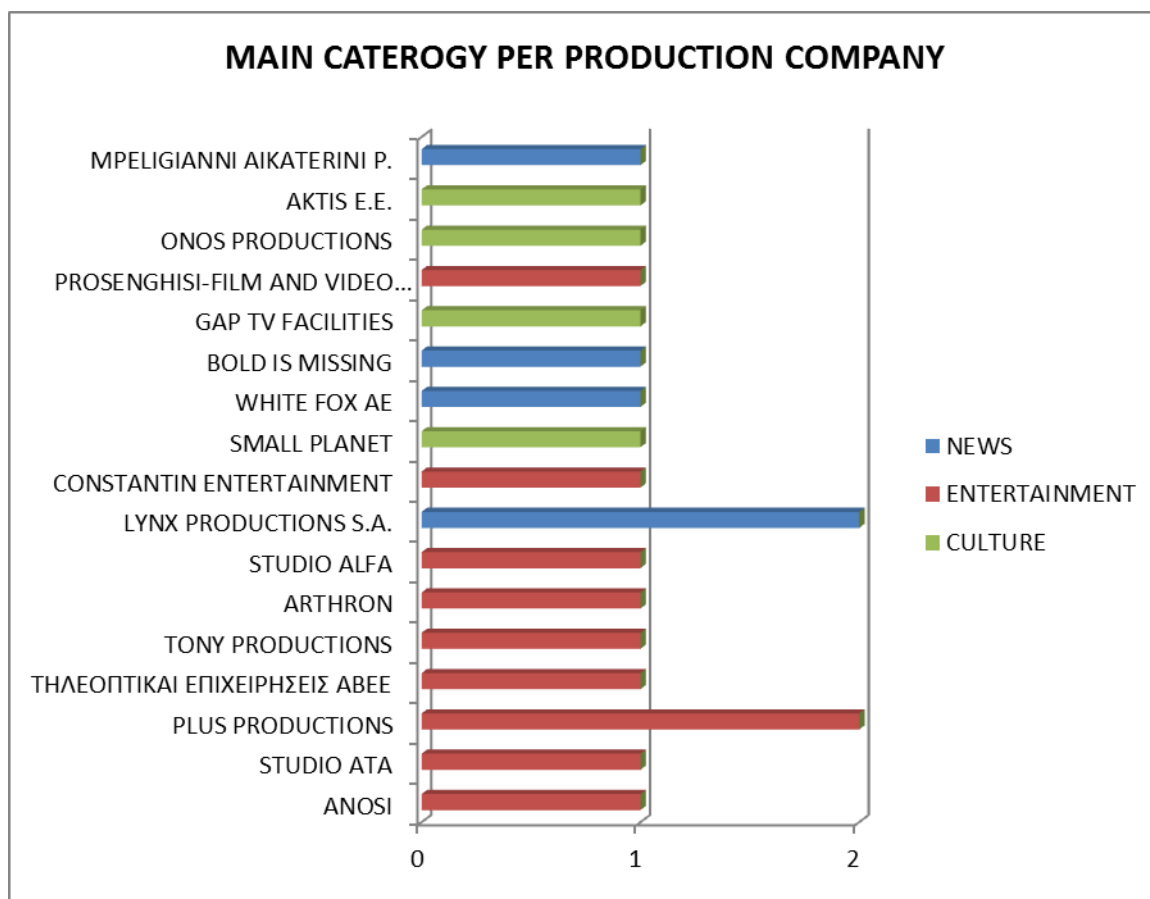
The combination of the above two variables (general programming category and type of production) with a third variable, namely the ownership status of the television channel, highlights the clear preference of private channels towards entertainment programmes, both in external and in-house productions. On the contrary, public channels have a slight preference towards cultural shows being externally produced, while their in-house productions show a clear prevalence towards informational shows over entertainment or cultural programmes. More specifically, as illustrated in graph 8.4, entertainment shows prevail on private channels, both as external (10 out of 12 productions) and as in-house productions (14 out of 21 productions). For public channels, culture is more important, since external productions are most frequently cultural (four versus three informational shows); while in-house productions are more frequently informative (19 out of total 30 productions) (graph 8.4).<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup>In 2008, entertainment was the most frequent programme on private channels (40 out of 46 external productions and eight out of 16 in-house productions), while on public channels, external productions were more frequently cultural (seven out of 10 productions) and in-house productions informative (15 out of 18 productions).



Graph 8. 4: Main programming category per channel type. More specifically, the tendencies of public and private television channels are compared. Numbers refer to the number of programmes.

The prevalence of entertainment productions as external productions is also established through the connection between general programming categories and production companies. Out of the 19 total external productions, 10 are entertainment shows, five informational and four cultural shows (graph 8.5). In this period, it is not possible for the researcher to refer to a concentration of any kind with regard to external productions of programmes, given that there are only 19 productions, which are created by 17 companies. The only companies that have two productions are Lynx Productions and Plus Productions. This contrasts with the mapping of the field four years ago. At that time, there were certain “big” production companies that held a significant percentage of the total external productions. In the same period, in 2008, there were 30 companies in total and five of them were big enough to have more than two productions and a percentage of 44.6% (25 in 56) of the total external programming production, depicting a de facto “concentration” in the field of external productions.

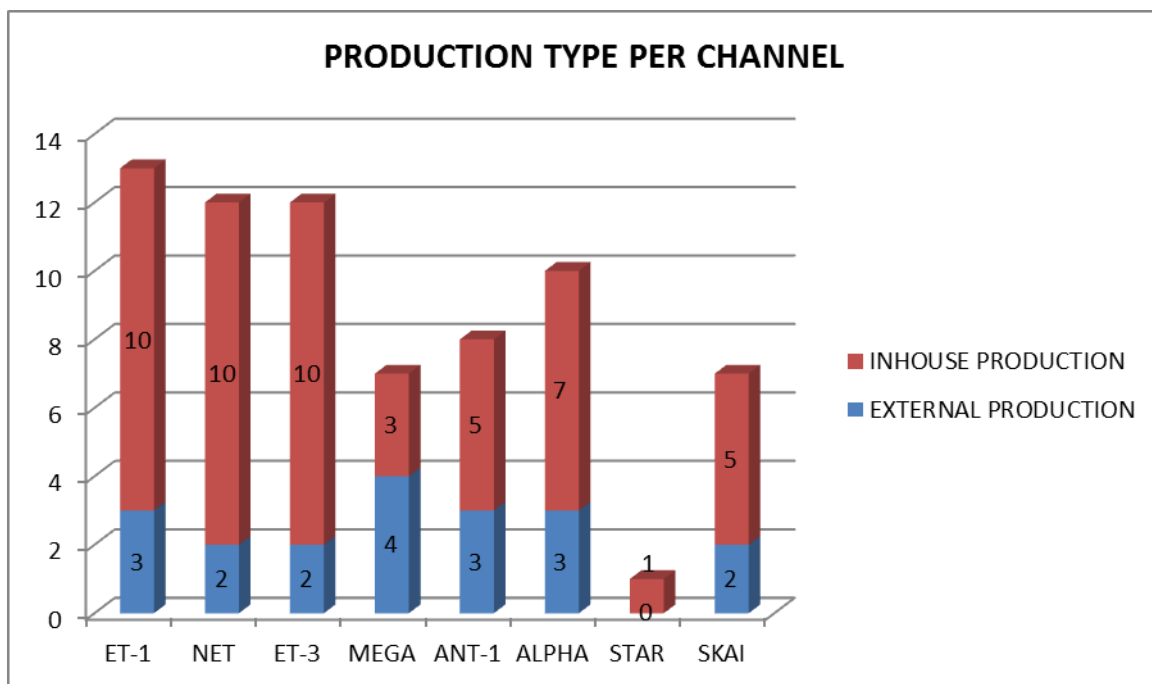


Graph 8. 5: Main programming category per production company.

In the autumn of 2008, there were five big companies, whose productions attained high viewer ratings, which added to the idea of there being a concentration in the area of ratings as well. In 2012, due to financial difficulties and the resulting decrease of external productions, there was no company that had a significant percentage of the programmes produced. It is also worth noting that, out of the five big – based on the number of programmes produced – production companies in 2008, in 2012, just two participated in a channels’ programming and with only one production each.

The unambiguous prevalence of in-house productions in the current season (2012) can be seen in graph 8.6. Out of all the television channels under examination, only MEGA shows more external productions than in-house (four versus three), at the same time, it also shows a small number of programmes produced, either externally or in-house, having just seven productions in total. ET1 has the largest amount of total productions, broadcasting 13 in total, while STAR has only one. The rest of the channels lie between these two, with a clear preference towards in-house productions. In the same period in 2008, ET1 had 14

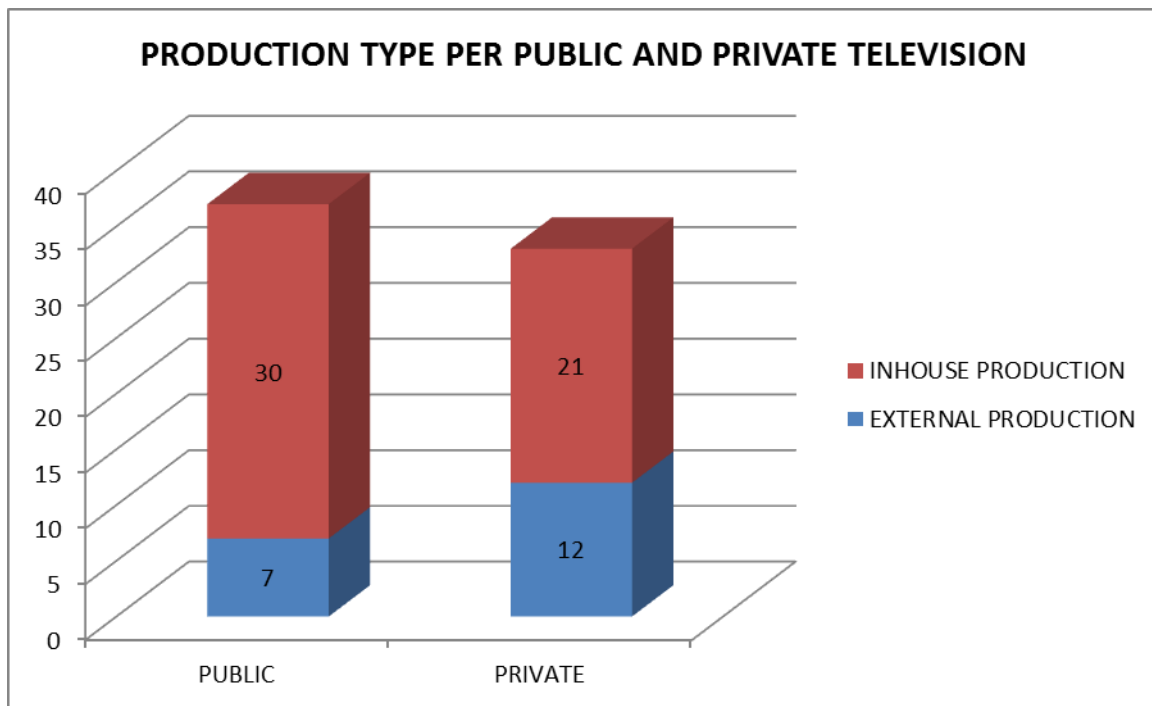
productions (six external and eight in-house), NET had 13 (three external and 10 in-house), ET3 had 11 productions (one external and 10 in-house), MEGA had 20 (18 external and two in-house), ANT1 had 14 productions (all external), ALPHA had 13 (11 external and two in-house), STAR had three (one external and two in-house) and SKAI had four productions (two external and two in-house). These numbers illustrate both the great decrease in the number of total productions in private channels, as well as the decline in external productions in the private television sector (graph 8.6), an observation that is presented more concisely in graph 8.7.



Graph 8. 6: Production type (external/in-house) per channel.

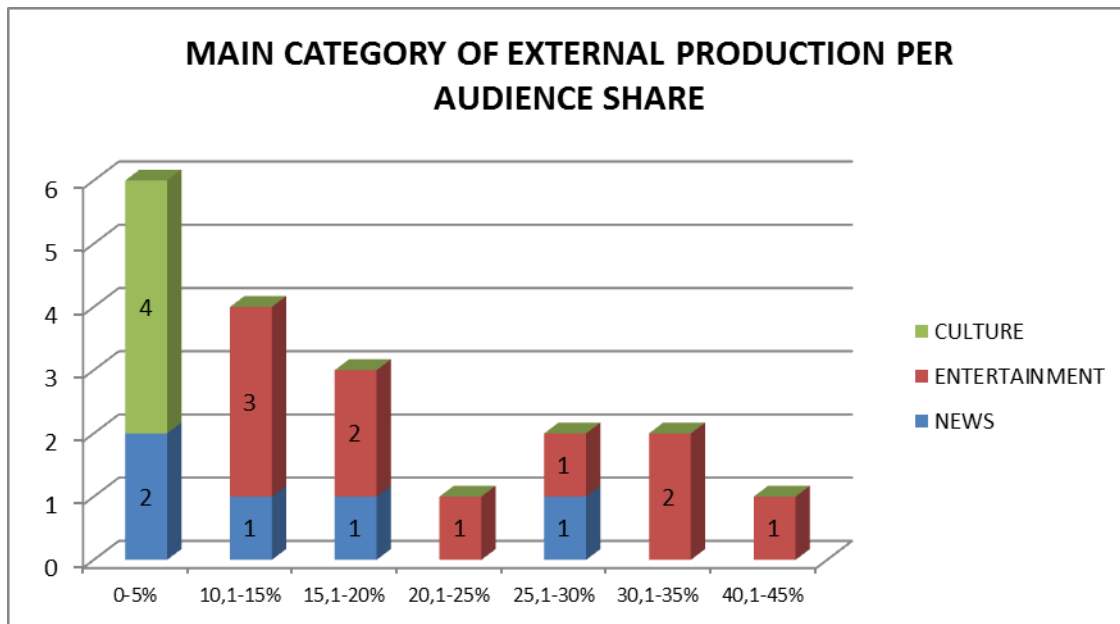
As shown in graph 8.7, public channels have the largest number of productions, with 37 programmes produced, but external productions make up only 19% of their total productions (seven out of 37). On the other hand, private channels have less external or in-house productions (33), but they have a greater number of external productions in comparison with in-house (12 out of 33, or 36.4% of total productions). In 2008, for the same period, public channels broadcast 38 productions, 10 of which were externally produced, while private channels had a total of 62 productions, 46 of which were external. It should be noted that, while for public channels the number of productions and the ratio between external and in-house productions remained stable in comparison to 2008, the total number of productions

broadcast by private channels has declined by nearly 50%, while in-house productions decreased by over 70%, compared to 2008.



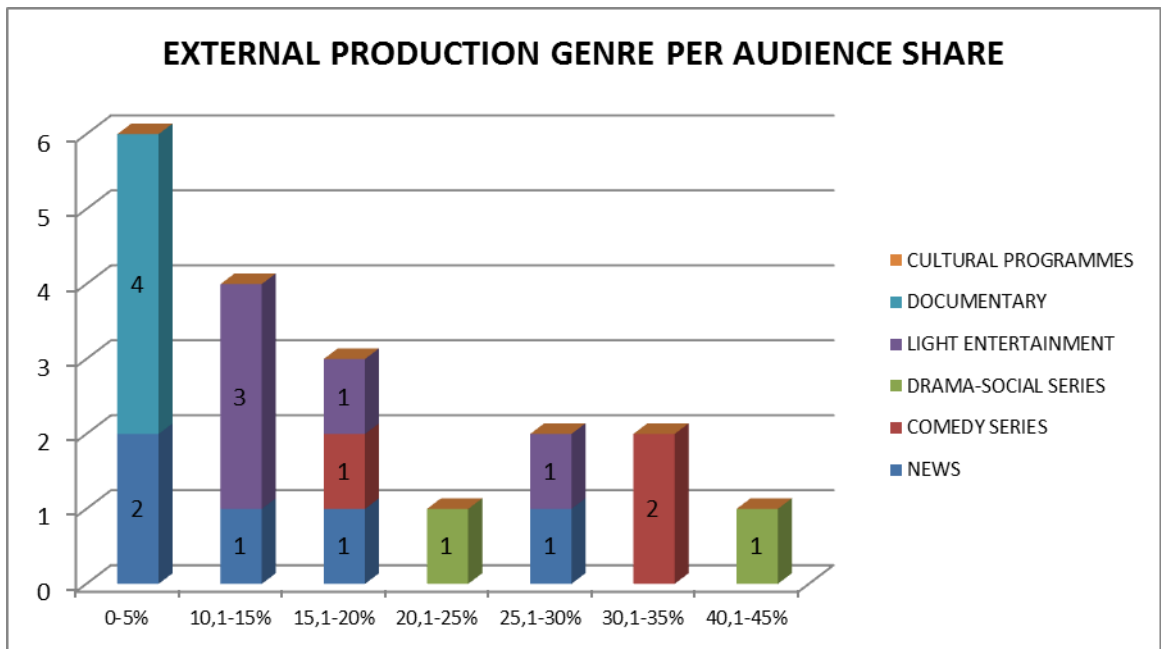
Graph 8. 7: Production type (external/in-house) per channel group (private/public).

As regards the ratings for the different types of external productions, entertainment is in first place. As shown in graph 8.5 above, most companies prefer entertainment productions, which have, according to graph 8.8, the highest ratings. As graph 8.8 illustrates, the ratings for cultural shows appear to be quite low (0-5%). The ratings for external informational productions are slightly higher, since four out of five shows (a percentage of 70%) attain 15.1-20%, while one show has even higher ratings, with a percentage of 25.1-30%. However, all entertainment productions have ratings of over 10%, while 40% of them reach a percentage of over 25% (graph 8.8).



Graph 8. 8: Main categories of external production per audience share. The horizontal column indicates the audience share and the vertical column indicates the number of programmes (frequency). The source of the ratings was AGB Hellas.

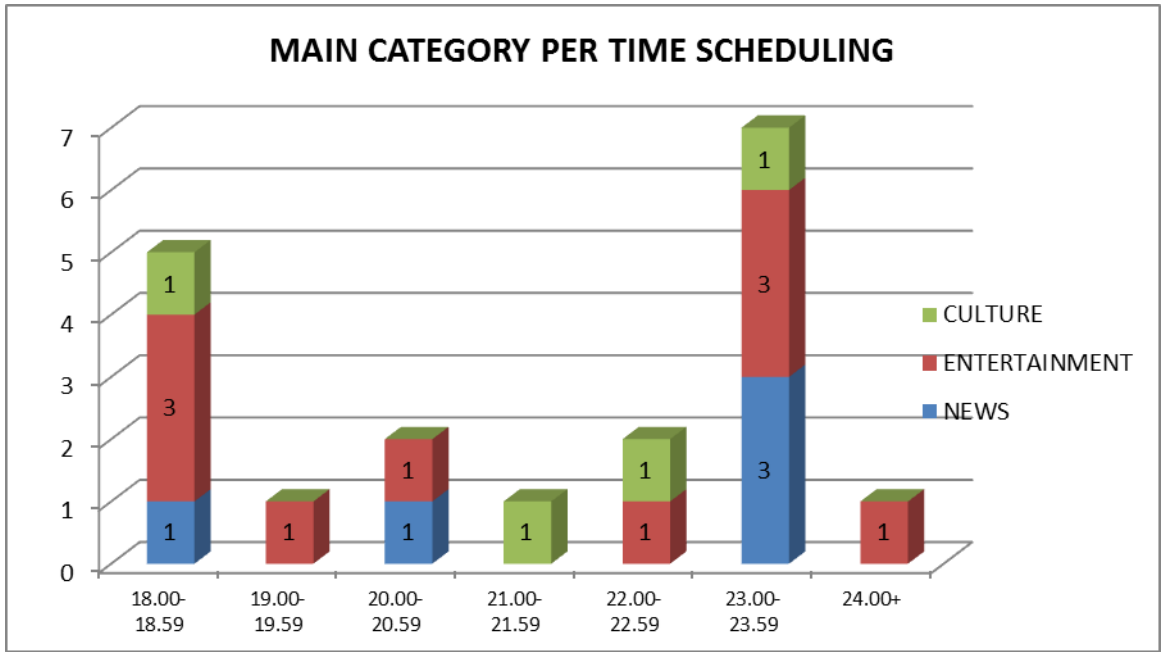
The following graph (8.9) presents a far more detailed view with regard to the ratings for external productions, by classifying them into specific categories. The only cultural shows that are externally produced are documentaries, which attain the lowest level of ratings (0-5%). Informational shows are also found in the three lower levels of ratings, except for one, namely “Light in the Tunnel” (a journalistic research show about crime). The highest ratings are found for various entertainment shows, drama series, comedies and satirical shows and light entertainment; the last category typically has the lowest ratings within the category of entertainment shows.



Graph 8. 9: External production genres by audience share. The horizontal column indicates the audience share and the vertical column indicates the number of programmes (frequency). The source of the ratings was AGB Hellas.

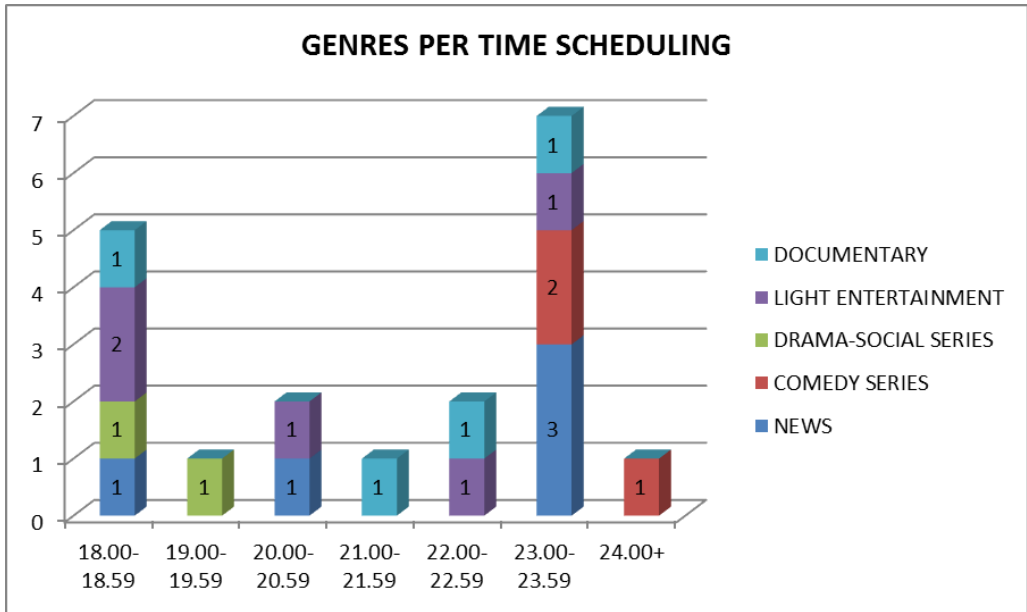
In contrast to the research conducted in 2008, which depicted the basic role of the zones 21.00-21.59 and 22.00-22.59 as being the start time for entertainment shows, this study shows that this has changed, giving the first place to zones 18.00-18.59 and 23.00-23.59. Three entertainment shows start in each of these zones (3+3), out of a total of 10 external entertainment productions. In the same zones, 12 out of the 19 external productions are broadcast as well. The temporal shift of the external productions is probably caused by a number of factors, such as the inclusion in other high rating zones, either of imported programmes or of reruns (graph 8.10).





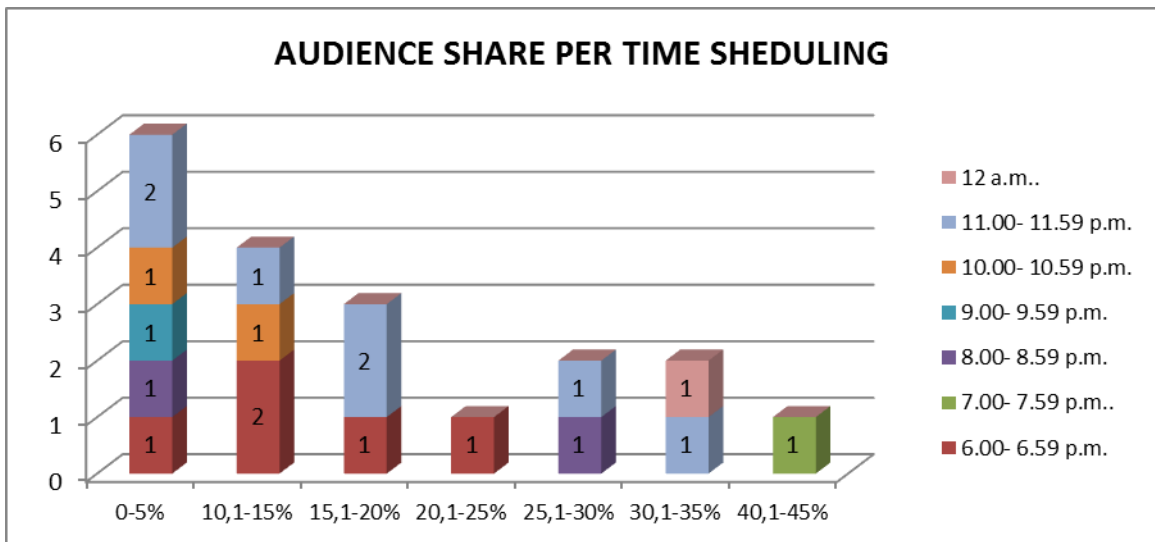
Graph 8. 10: Main programming categories by time scheduling. In this graph, programming zones are illustrated, according to their topic category.

A more specific image of the distribution of the few external productions according to specific programming category is provided by graph 8.11. Light entertainment appears to be the most dominant in the general category of entertainment, with five productions being broadcast in different time zones, while there are three comedies/satirical shows and two social/drama series. In the field of information, five shows are broadcast, while there are also four documentaries. The starting time for independent productions peaks in the time period 23.00-23.59, which is also the zone during which all types of external productions, except drama series, start.



Graph 8. 11: Programming genres by time scheduling. This is essentially a sub categorization of graph 8.10.

Finally, the audience shares are studied, according to the different time zones during which the programming is broadcast. It is noted that, in contrast to 2008, the time zone 21.00-21.59 is almost entirely absent, apart from one public channel which has a production with low ratings. Furthermore, it is established that the majority of external productions is found in the late hours, since after 23.00, three out of five productions are broadcast, which have ratings over 25%.



Graph 8. 12: Audience share by time scheduling. The source of the ratings was AGB Hellas.

## 8.2. Findings of the comparative analysis

In the methodology chapter, certain working hypotheses and basic research questions were laid out. This subchapter focuses on the discussion of the conclusions, drawn from the analysis of the findings in the previous subchapter.

As regards the ratio of in-house to external productions in the time zones under examination, in-house productions show a clear prevalence over external productions (graph 8.1). This is completely different from the conditions in the same period, in 2008.

The time zone 18.00-24.00 is clearly the “entertainment zone” since entertainment programmes claim the lion’s share, compared to information and cultural programmes. Despite that, television channels, due to financial difficulties, prefer to cover this zone mainly with in-house productions, imported series and reruns of older external productions.

Compared to 2008, the ratio of in-house to external productions has significantly altered, in favour of in-house productions, while at the same time the “reign” of entertainment in external productions has also decreased. In 2008, three out of four external productions were entertainment programmes, while in this study their percentage is barely over 50%. Furthermore, television networks seem to prefer producing informational shows in-house, while the most balanced category is cultural programmes (graph 8.3).

In the study of the period 2008-2009, an important point in the analysis of the findings was the percent of the concentration of programmes vis-à-vis specific companies, which was hindering source diversity. The findings led to the conclusion that there is a considerable concentration in the field of programming production, given that just five production companies out of the total 37, were producing over 40% of the programmes, thus creating a significant concentration in the field. In 2012, this situation has transformed radically.

The economic crisis and the resulting financial difficulties that the channels face have caused the number of external productions to plummet. Moreover, the production companies also have to deal with financial problems of their own and consequently, they have considerably limited their activity. A typical example is that out of the five big production companies in 2008, just two produced programmes that are broadcast in the period under examination for the 2012 season, with only one production each. Furthermore, it is not possible to refer to conditions of concentration with regard to specific companies, since the limited number of

external productions (just 19) that are broadcast, are created by 17 different production companies.

The disintegration of productions, as well as the decrease of the prevalence of entertainment, is caused by the substantial decline of external productions that are broadcast on private channels. The study in 2008 showed that private channels were collaborating with big production companies and were almost exclusively broadcasting entertainment programmes. On the other hand, public channels showed exceptional tendencies towards pluralism with regard to their collaboration with small production companies, while at the same time, they were broadcasting many different genres in their programming. The significant decrease of external productions in 2012 comes from private channels (public channels are at the same levels as in 2008). As a consequence, the category of entertainment has decreased and the distinction between big and small companies, based on the amount of programmes produced, has nearly been eradicated.

Based on the analysis that has been presented thus far, the first and fourth working hypotheses of this research seem valid, namely that the economic crisis adversely affected external productions and the ratio to in-house productions. At the same time, the second and third hypotheses, regarding the absence of diversity in external productions, are rejected and it is established that there is an ownership connection between private channels and production companies, through the broadcasting of programmes that the associated companies produce.

As regards the fifth working hypothesis, the small number of productions in each company, just one production for the 15 of the total 17 companies in the current season, does not provide enough grounds for us to talk about the companies specializing in entertainment or other programmes. It is possible to talk about specialization with regard to the two companies that participate, with two productions each: Lynx Productions, which produces two informational programmes, and Plus Productions with two entertainment shows. However, the number of programmes produced remains too small for us to talk with absolute certainty about the specialization of these two companies.

Based on the findings of the study in 2008, when the “big” production companies were specialized to some extent in entertainment programmes, some conclusions can be drawn. One possible explanation for this was that fiction programmes have high production costs, which could only be afforded by big companies with sufficient financial power. This argument is supported by the fact that in 2012, amid the economic crisis, there were only three

external fiction productions that were broadcast for the first time (“Stolen Dreams”, in Greek “Klemera Onira”; “My Mother’s Sin”, in Greek “To amartima tis mitros mou” and “Family Stories”, in Greek “Ecogeniakes Istories”). The last is a low budget production, which employed unknown actors and even complete amateurs.

Closely related to the absence of concentration in the field of production is the absence of concentration with regard to the ratings of programmes created by specific production companies, which also contrasts with the situation in 2008. Although entertainment is still the category with the highest ratings, this cannot be associated with specific companies; these ratings depend exclusively on the ratings the channels have in the various time zones.

Moreover, the dominance, even if it has decreased compared to 2008, of entertainment programmes, with regard to the ratings (graph 8.8), indicates a decline of the ratings of cultural shows, which proves the sixth working hypothesis of this thesis to be correct.

Entertainment shows and their subcategories are found in the time zone 10.00 p.m. - 12.00 a.m. (graph 8.9), which constitutes a relatively prime time zone. Thus we can partially accept the working hypothesis regarding the quantitative prevalence of entertainment programmes (number of programmes broadcast) in prime-time zones. The partial acceptance is due to the fact that in the hour that constitutes the “focal point” of the prime-time zone, namely 9.00 p.m. - 10.00 p.m., there are no external productions on any channel, with the exception of one production on a public channel. Private channels cover this hour either with reruns of fiction productions (e.g., MEGA “The Kings”, in Greek “Vasiliades”), or with imported series (e.g., ANT1 “Suleiman the Magnificent”, STAR “NCIS”) or with a combination of movies, reruns and in-house productions (ALPHA) or, finally, with news (SKAI).

In Greek television, the concept of programming co-productions, either international or domestic, is almost entirely absent. In all the cases that were studied, there was no cooperation whatsoever among the production companies, while the same thing was found with relation to production companies and television channels, with the exception of one or two cases, where the public networks collaborated with production companies for the creation of cultural shows. Thus we must reject the eighth working hypothesis.

With regard to the ownership status of the production companies, which survived during the crisis, the research that was conducted using data from the National Press Office and by looking at the internet sites of these companies did not reveal any alteration in their

shareholders' structure, compared to the previous study in 2008. The actual change in these companies is their financial difficulties, which have led some of them, such as ENA Productions, which is linked to ANT1 Group, and ON Productions, which is linked to channels MEGA& STAR, to cease their activities, as they stopped participating in any production in any channel's programming. It is worth noting that, in 2008, these two companies belonged to the group of big companies, with five and seven productions respectively.

To briefly summarize the second study that was conducted, we can say that it depicts the field of external television production amid an actual crisis, which reflects the wider financial crisis faced by the media, as a direct consequence of the economic crisis in Greece.

The thriving field that was studied in 2008, in just four years, has become a field that seems to have disintegrated, with companies searching for an appropriate course of action by making financial readjustments. The era of numerous productions belongs to the past and now the production companies are limited to one or two productions, usually of low budget, while television channels, mostly private ones, tend to seek solutions, other than new external productions or fiction programmes, which constitute the most expensive productions. Therefore, in-house productions now prevail among the new programmes broadcast by the channels, as well as light entertainment shows, while foreign series have a considerable presence in the evening zone (6.00 p.m. -12.00 a.m.), since they are less expensive than domestic productions. Following the same logic, reruns have also become extremely frequent and they can even be broadcast in prime-time zones.

## CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

### 9.1. The process of assessing content diversity

The study of television as a medium is a complex issue which cannot be approached unilaterally, due to its dual nature: It is viewed as a communication medium, on the one hand, and, on the other, as content. These two dimensions create various directions that make the research into television even more challenging, since they introduce concepts, such as ratings, the economical aspect of the medium and policy strategies. These concepts add complexity to the study of television, with regard to the direction that a researcher will follow. Newcomb and Hirsch (1983), for instance, claim that a cultural approach would bridge the view of television as a communication medium and as an aesthetic object. The interdisciplinary complexity of television, whether it is approached socially or culturally, or as a business tool for its owners, requires that each study be delineated a priori. In other words, the researcher has to determine the approach that will be employed and which aspect of television will be examined.

As part of this research, the process of studying content is organized. More specifically, the study of content focuses on the analysis of programming genres, of viewpoint diversity and of the production field, namely source diversity. The above multi-levelled empirical analysis leads to an interactive approach to the study of content and the development of content diversity – with the exception of viewpoint diversity, which has its own particular characteristics. By analysing this process, where the level of programming and production interact with each other, using the methodology that was followed, significant findings with regard to components and subcomponents emerge, which constitute useful tools or steps for a comprehensive analysis of television content. Furthermore, these methodological tools can be enriched with more components and become the basis for future studies of content.

The important point in the assessment of the degree of content diversity is that the constituent elements of this empirical process do not act independently but that they interact. This means that diversity is a dynamic and complex concept and its assessment is developed through combined features. For instance, in the introduction of this research, the effect of external pluralism on the development of internal pluralism was discussed and its extent. This research indicates – at least with respect to the empirical analysis of Greek television – that production and diversity of production significantly affect the development of content

diversity. For instance, a great degree of content homogeneity was observed, which can be explained by certain practices at the level of production, such as the ratio of external and in-house productions or imported series and their rebroadcasting. Such practices are expected to create tendencies towards conventionality in the content.

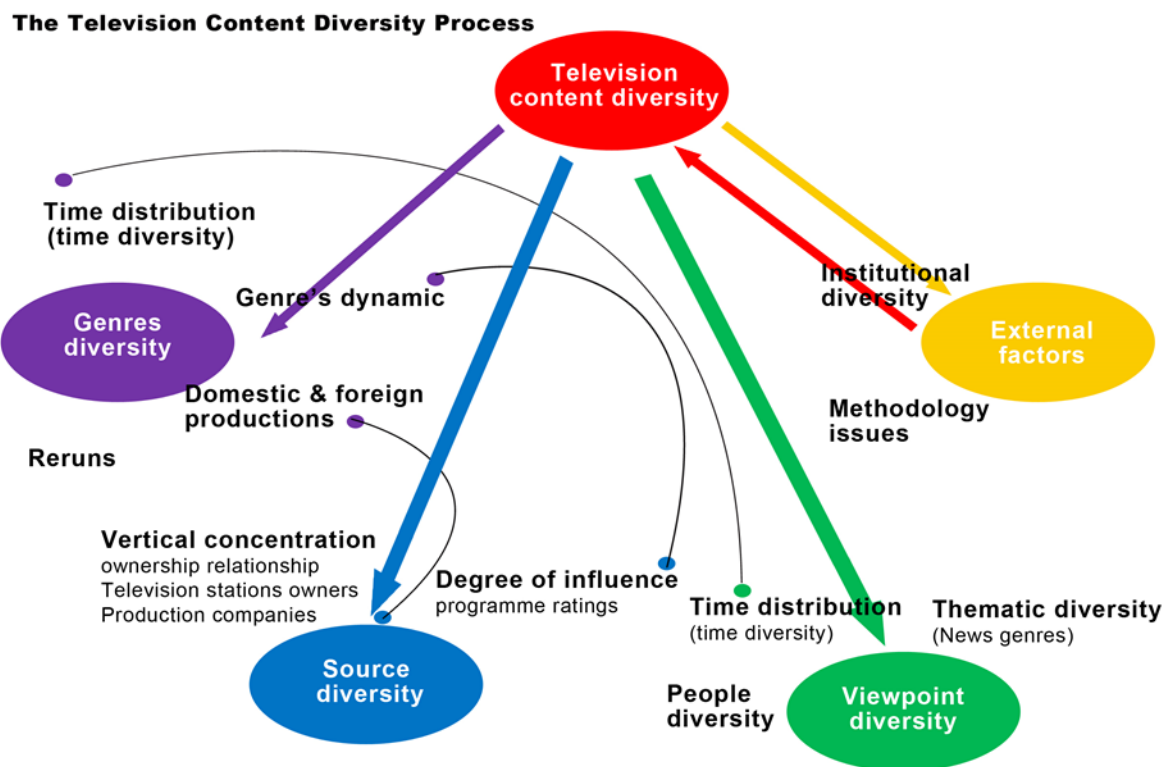


Figure 9. 1: Concluding diagram: This diagram presents the interactive chain of the process of assessing the degree of diversity, as developed through the empirical analyses and approaches in of this research. The three pylons that were examined are illustrated, namely genre diversity, source diversity and viewpoint diversity, along with the features that complete the approach.

One of the most important findings of this research is identifying the degree of influence that the financial restructuring of the market has had on content. The comparative analysis between the findings of the seventh and eighth chapter, with regard to the situation before and during the economic crisis in Greece, clearly shows that content is affected by external factors. For instance, the decrease of external productions or the increase of imported, less expensive programmes are currently two basic features of the Greek television market, along with other issues that were discussed in the eighth chapter. Nevertheless, the exact degree of the influence of external factors on content cannot be assessed with certainty, given that it is



not possible for a piece of research to incorporate all the elements that form the content of television. What we essentially attempted in this research is to approach specific axes of the production process, with regard to the financial situation in the market before and during crisis and, in this way, to compare the data from the two different periods and highlight the changes that occurred in television.

It should be stressed here that, as mentioned in the methodology chapter as well, this research approaches the economic crisis not as a socio-economic phenomenon, but as a time period, in which the field of television is readjusted.

Other connections with regard to the chain of the process of assessing diversity are shown in this empirical analysis through the common features of the process. For instance, as shown in the above graph, the time factor is used to describe or assess the degree of diversity, as an additional element, both for genre and viewpoint diversity. Another common feature is the dynamic of genres, which is studied within the context of genre diversity, as well as of the degree of influence; the latter is examined in source diversity, with respect to production companies. It is essentially the same feature, since both the dynamic of genres and the degree of the influence of production companies are studied using viewer ratings. These correlations are of great importance because they prove through this empirical study that the assessment of the degree of content diversity is influenced by and interacts with dependent variables. The most significant point is that the production process greatly affects the degree of content diversity. Nonetheless, it is clear that in this process external factors play an important role as well, such as institutional diversity and how this process functions in small nations, or even methodological issues and criteria, since each television environment has its own particular characteristics that affect the applied methodology.

More specifically, the first stage of this empirical analysis is the study of the way the genres are formed within the programme. This approach basically suggests a distinction between private and public television. The time periods of the analysis do not affect this approach in general, but this depends on each researcher and the comparisons he or she wishes to explore.

In this research, the analysis of the genre of the content is conducted by examining the degree of the diversity of the genres that constitute the television programming. The first feature of the analysis of genre is to measure the total percentage of each genre (typology, as discussed in the methodology chapter is determined by external factors, such as the methodology for

categorizing genre used by AGB) during the time period the researcher decides to examine. The second feature deals with the total time distribution (e.g., by percentage) of each genre. In this way, the intensity of each genre within the total time distribution of the programming is shown. A third element is genre analysis with regard to the proportion of viewer ratings. This feature, in correlation with time distribution produces safer findings with regard to each genre's dynamic. The fourth feature is the comparison between domestic (in this case Greek) and foreign productions, an element that is thoroughly examined from the perspective of source diversity. The last feature is the proportion of genre reruns to first broadcasts. This is important because, by identifying the proportion of reruns, more objective and accurate conclusions can be drawn with regard to the degree of content diversity, since the higher the proportion of reruns, the lower the degree of content diversity. The existence of content homogeneity and therefore, of a low degree of diversity, is one of the main conclusions of this research. Apart from that a tendency on the part of channels to copy each other was observed, with the exception of public television which follows its own programming strategy. Content mimicking is one of the main factors of content homogeneity. Clearly, in this case, questions are raised about its causes and the reason why channels prefer to imitate their competitors. Audience conformism and, in general, the trends and the context within which the viewers function do not leave channels with many alternatives for differentiated content. In other words, the channels prefer to adhere to established practice and – as shown from the findings in the fifth chapter – maintain their viewer ratings.

As discussed in this thesis, homogeneity can take many forms and have several meanings, which makes distinguishing between homogeneity and heterogeneity quite challenging. What is important is the way the researcher approaches homogeneity methodologically, that is, the methodological framework within which it is placed. For instance, if a researcher chooses to interpret this within the context of genre categorization, which is the second level of analysis (the programming category is the first one), then he or she could find a high concentration of certain genres in the programming of the channels under examination, which would lead him or her to the conclusion that there is a high degree of homogeneity. However, if the researcher moves further, into the third level of analysis, namely subgenres, then he or she may conclude that the channel's programming is heterogeneous, since when the level of programming categorization changes, content may be differentiated to a greater or lesser degree. For instance, if there is homogeneity among the channels, with regard to the category of 'entertainment', this does necessarily indicates homogeneity at the level of genre (e.g.,

‘reality shows’), even though the empirical study in this thesis leads us to the conclusion that there is homogeneity with regard to this as well. Nonetheless, what is argued here is that the categorization followed by a researcher in the process of the study of diversity and consequently the levels of categorization (programming category level, genre category level, etc.) that he defines, have great significance for the results of his or her study. Evidently, this also depends on the framework and the boundaries a researcher wishes to set in his or her research.

The second stage of the research, suggested in the above empirical study, is the analysis conducted at the level of production, namely of source diversity. The study of source diversity is comprised of two features: The degree of influence and the degree of vertical market concentration.

In this research, the degree of influence of a programming is associated with the ratings it attains. In order to further clarify this point, it should be pointed out that the producers themselves are influenced by this as well, since they aim to achieve higher ratings. In this way, their product is affected. The empirical analysis showed that audience shares have a determinant role in influencing production and therefore they considerably affect the degree of content diversity. The connection between ratings and diversity is an issue that has not been extensively studied by researchers and this is the reason why there is space for such a research study. This study illustrates several important points about this matter. Firstly, it records which companies’ productions receive high ratings and which channels commission productions to these companies. In addition, it highlights the element of positioning within a programme, that is, in which time zone a programming with high or low ratings is positioned. Clearly, in order for the effects of the ratings on content diversity to be properly studied, additional research should be conducted, with regard to the channels’ decision making processes. In other words, the ways channels utilize ratings in connection with programming production should be analysed.

The second point related to source diversity is the issue of vertical concentration. Vertical concentration in media businesses refers to ownership relationships between two or more elements of the production chain, for example, the ownership relationship between TV channel owners and production companies. In many cases, this relationship between production companies and channels may affect the content that is broadcast, particularly if producers consider the beliefs, preferences and wishes of the media owners.

The third level of the empirical study is the analysis of news content, which in this research is called viewpoint diversity. Viewpoint diversity is linked to the wider approach to content, but at the same time, differs from the broader concept of content and has its own distinctive characteristics, as discussed previously. Of particular interest in the way the assessment of viewpoint diversity differs from genre or source diversity is the particularities in the categorization of journalistic coverage, which differs from the categorization of the rest of the programming. Viewpoint diversity is the only element that could be assessed separately in the chain of the process of assessing content, since it essentially has no relation to production companies or other programming genres. The approach to viewpoint diversity is comprised of three main methodological features, namely coverage, people diversity and temporal distribution of the topics presented. As regards future studies on viewpoint diversity, an interesting concept is that of news source diversity, which concerns the sources employed for the production of news. Naturally, it is a rather complex process, given that it does not deal with specific production companies, as is the case in other programming genres. News function differently and news sources are frequently scattered, unofficial, even anonymous. Therefore, recording news sources can be quite challenging, with the exception of official sources, such as international news agencies.

In this research the Greek economic crisis and how it affected the development of viewpoint diversity is also considered, since two time periods are studied; the first is before the economic crisis and the second during the crisis. A homogenization of the journalistic product is observed, as well as various preferences on the part of the channels with regard to the opinions they promote.

The disadvantage of studying viewpoint diversity – which was also discussed previously – is that the style of news cannot easily be studied; the way that topics are formed and developed however, can be examined. A single topic broadcast by two channels may be presented in a completely different way. Nevertheless, the categorization records it as a single topic. This is a significant limitation to the assessment of viewpoint diversity. Moreover, as argued in the third chapter, where this matter was discussed empirically, viewpoint diversity can be approached using several variables and therefore it depends on what the researcher wishes to assess. For instance, in the third chapter, the case of political diversity was considered, that is, how coverage of politics and politicians is distributed within television news bulletins.

The components that emerge from these three basic axes, namely genre analysis, viewpoint diversity and source diversity analysis, constitute a methodological approach to studying content, either individually or combined. Nevertheless – as previously discussed – a comprehensive study of content diversity should also incorporate genre analysis, as well as an analysis of production (source), which is also supported by the findings of this research with regard to the influence of source diversity on the degree of content diversity. After all, the interaction between the elements source and genre diversity is one of the most important points in this research, which gives an integrated view of diversity and its approach. Clearly, this research is focused on the case of Greece, an issue that should be analysed separately, since, as discussed above in the context of television studies in small nations, the television system of each country, and the media market in general, has its own distinctive characteristics, advantages, but also limitations, as discussed throughout this research. For example, in the theory chapter, the limitations of small nations, concerning the development and utilization of their television product, were presented.

In the next and final subchapter, the future implications and applications of such an approach to television content are discussed.

## **9.2. Comments regarding future research into television**

One of the most significant conclusive discussions in research of this kind concerns the future research possibilities for the field of television or the media in general. This is particularly true, since this is a field that is constantly developing and finding itself being restructured due to technological advances and economic changes. In addition, certain significant issues should be presented, which may provide answers to many of the methodological parameters of this research. Even if we are confident that the various expressions of diversity have been studied throughout this research, such as diversity of content genres, viewpoint diversity and source diversity, it is clear that the different aspects of television content change – either technologically or socially – so rapidly that a continuous study of television is required, since it is a medium that moves in the “fast lane”. During a lecture given by the author at Fordham University,<sup>79</sup> a discussion arose around the future of television and its content, and the question was raised as to whether the end of television is finally here, at least in the sense of the traditional form that exists today. This research partially answers this general question, using viewer ratings that indicate television’s mass potential. Therefore, what essentially

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<sup>79</sup>A. Masouras, ‘Global Media: A Myth or a Fact?’, Lecture at Fordham University, Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010, New York.

happens to television – which characterizes it diachronically – is that it is constantly restructured, influenced by external factors, such as financial conditions or technological advances. Several important factors that affect content reformation are discussed below.

The first element to emphasize for the purposes of future research is the role of journalistic practices in shaping content, a feature that is linked to viewpoint diversity, which was discussed previously. The role of journalists, as well as journalistic practices, could be included in the theoretical discussion of institutional diversity, since the practice of journalism takes place within the institutional bounds of society and the state, and the institutional framework interacts with the journalistic culture and attitudes. Consequently, viewpoint diversity could be studied from this perspective as well, namely it could be associated with and analysed in light of institutional diversity. This research indicated the following: News reports make up a significant part of the programming broadcast, as shown by the categorization of the genres, when the genre of news bulletins and different information-related and news-related programmes and shows is included. At this point, diversity may have two forms with a different starting point and the same denominator: On the one hand, diversity refers to the genres of information-related and news-related programmes and shows, as discussed in the chapter in which content homogenization was analysed empirically, in the methodology chapter, as well as in the chapter in which viewpoint diversity was addressed and the categorization that was used in this research study was developed. The primary role of news bulletins in the process of content diversification between channels should also be stressed, as well as their broad importance in the process of “building” the image of a channel. Apart from that, the study of content diversity through genre analysis – considered a separate procedure (this approach to viewpoint diversity provides the researcher with such an alternative) – does not lead to a thorough and multi-levelled examination of the content. On the contrary, it is the news-related diversity of the content of these shows and programmes, the diversity that is related to the topics of their content; this is why it is called the diversity of the topics or agenda of the programmes. This level of the study of diversity is not a simple genre analysis, but actually deals with the study of a genre’s content, namely the content of the journalistic genre. Clearly, news coverage is a significantly broad issue that it can be methodologically approached through various components and variables. In this thesis, it was approached comprehensively, in an attempt to cover as many aspects of journalistic content as possible and to accurately measure its degree of diversity. At this point, the role of journalistic practices in shaping content should be

emphasized, as the topics are determined by the sources used for the coverage of the news, which makes the diversity of journalistic sources an issue for future research. Therefore, the diversity of issues can be accessed through the use of journalistic sources, as well as in connection to other parameters – which were examined in this research – such as, for instance, the assessment of the frequency of the representation of politicians or political groups in information-related and news-related programmes and shows, i.e., the assessment of the degree of people and group diversity (including political parties), a parameter which was addressed in this research. In addition, the classification of programmes and shows into secondary topics – the study of the subcategories of issues covered by the news, such as local news – is another parameter that could lead to the assessment of the degree of the diversity of the topics. Therefore, the system and the method by which journalists in a television channel work, and the orders they probably receive regarding a specific ideological or journalistic stance, contribute greatly to the content and style of the programmes in general. Of relevance, regarding the issue of institutions, which was discussed in this research, is that schools of journalism – whether they are universities or not – especially now that television changes so rapidly, may and should play a determinant role in the creation of a proper journalistic culture and the promotion of a qualitative school of thought for the production of programmes and the production of media content in general.

Therefore, another issue that could be dealt with in the future, as it has a direct impact on the journalistic practices that are referred to above, is the technological growth and development of television and how these changes that have occurred affect research into content and diversity. This is, however, a more general issue which cannot be analysed here; nevertheless, it would be useful to explore it further – as an extension of the previous discussion on the classification and categorization of the content – examining, specifically, how the digital convergence of television affects the methods of classifying content that are used by the companies that provide television audience measurement (TAM) services. Specifically, in the second chapter, the techniques that AGB uses were analysed, in order to classify and categories programming either for the purposes of assessing and measuring television viewing ratings or to analyse the different categories of genres and subgenres of programming, for the benefit of the channels and their programmers, so that they can analyse the choices of their competitors. This research focused on the method used by that specific company, since it is the main source for channels and advertising companies and a method that is widely accepted. The application of the AGB method concerns analogue television and

during the last five years company specialists have tried new methods of classifying the programming of digital platforms (Makrides, pers. comm., 2009). The approach shall be, however, quite different, since there are new methods of television broadcasting used that extensively change the wider philosophy of programming, while the number of channels which have access to these platforms will triple. At this point, three examples should be mentioned for future reflection and examination.

The first methodological issue concerns the classification of programming into genres, as well as the measurement of television viewing ratings, which depends on the different services – such as, for instance, time-shifted programming – provided by digital television to the viewer. Time-shifted programming could be considered a programming policy rather than a service. This is because the wide range of frequencies provided by digital platforms has made the owners of television channels aware of the policy of time-shifted programming, a low-cost policy that gives them the opportunity of acquiring more television frequencies. In essence, a time shift channel<sup>80</sup> is a television channel which carries a time-delayed rebroadcast of its “parent” channel’s output. In addition, the same advertisements are broadcast many times. This policy is not incidental. First, the owners of the television channels cannot broadcast their programming on another frequency for no extra cost by “advertising” their “parent” channel. Second, the owners of the television channels provide advertising entities with “extra space”, at no extra cost. The ease of acquiring additional frequencies provided by digital platforms raises a new issue concerning the measurement of television viewing ratings, since, in essence, it concerns the assessment of the television viewing ratings of the same programming in a different time and space – as well as the assessment of diversity. Which criteria will be used in order to include time-shift channels in a future wider methodology and how will these criteria affect the assessment of diversity, since, in essence, there is a repeated broadcast of the same genres? This is an issue that should be dealt with.

Second is the digital service of video on demand,<sup>81</sup> a service that lets the viewer watch older television programmes and shows or watch other programmes in addition to the current

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<sup>80</sup>A time-shift channel is a television channel which carries a time-delayed rebroadcast of its “parent” channel’s output. This channel runs alongside their parent: The term “time-shift” does not refer to a network broadcasting at a later time to reflect a local time zone, unless the parent is also available. Often the time-shift channel’s branding and advertising will be the same as that of the parent, with the channel number and respective timing being the only distinction between the two, but some, such as Channel 4+1 in the United Kingdom, will overlay a different digital on-screen graphic to distinguish the two channels. A few channels, like Film 4+1 in the United Kingdom, do not carry a digital on-screen graphic on its regular channel or its time-shift channel.

<sup>81</sup>Video on Demand (VOD) is a system which allows users to select and watch video content on demand.



scheduling of the channel. Therefore, the question of how the television viewing of a channel that provides this service can be recorded is raised. In addition, the question as to whether such a service will be included in the assessment of the methodology is raised.

Another issue that will arise is that of the huge number and variety of channels that emerge through digital platforms. The wide range of channels, of which most are thematic, changes the whole philosophy of the study of content diversity. At this point, it is indicative that even web-based television channels, those that broadcast via the Internet, may, by using digital technology and by entering into a relevant agreement with the digital platform provider, broadcast their programming through television receivers. In the digital television environment, there are no specific channels that share the same viewing ratings pie. In the new digital setting, television viewing is defined and assessed by using other rules and factors such as, for instance, the distinction of the channels into parent and time-shift channels, as previously mentioned. However, a radical classification of the channels, considering their type and thematic content, should be made and television viewing ratings by category should be assessed separately. I also believe that such an approach may contribute greatly to the assessment of the intensity of diversity in the right direction, since with the advent of digital television genres are reshaped, new genres are invented and their respective proportion of airtime changes qualitatively.

In addition, new technologies create new ideas, concepts and practices as regards the television industry and shape a new idea of the viewer. The viewer is not perceived traditionally in the digital reality as “the person who watches television” but as a content user and consumer (Ardissono, Kobsa and Maybury, 2004).

Finally, there is a third dimension related to certain issues around research into media ownership, or source diversity. From his study into source diversity, Philip Napoli drew certain significant conclusions. First, he considers that the collection and classification of data concerning ownership status is quite a difficult task, since ownership relations and the composition of the shareholders are not clear and accessible. According to Napoli, integrated and renewable databases should be created, which should be widely accessible to academia, the industry, the public and researchers working on governmental policy. The research objective of the assessment of source diversity is to determine the impact of the shareholder structure of the channels and the production companies on content and its diversity. This is what Napoli refers to as media performance, which is influenced by ownership status. At this

precise point a methodological and research gap can be detected: This is the case where the non-structured recording of ownership relations impedes the further study of certain specificities of the performance of content.

Finally, it is worth touching on a new concept regarding content diversity introduced by Napoli. This is the concept of ‘participation’ in content and how it may shape diversity within content. During a recent discussion with him, he pointed out the following: “I know some scholars have addressed the notion of participation as it relates to television in terms of things like reality television. This isn’t an angle that interests me much, only because I don’t think it has a tremendous amount of policy relevance. I do think that at this point the notion of participation is quite a bit more resonant in the Web space, but in the TV space I think notions of participation that might be relevant would be the extent to which there are systems in place that allow for citizen-generated content (I’m thinking, for instance, of public access television channels), or the extent to which programmers solicit and act upon input from their audiences” (Napoli, pers. comm., 2010). The Internet is a space for the development of such a concept and television is moving towards this. This does not mean that the television space is in crisis. On the contrary, it is in a “safe mode” – and this is not the case with the press, for instance – and it is the mode of shaping and reproducing its content and not the degree of content diversity changes. It is not likely, for instance, to develop new genres. Besides, this is a list that is now ‘closed’, a list that will not be subject to any further change. In essence, television content is reproduced in the Web space. Therefore, it is worth waiting to watch how the lines of relevance between television space and Web space change, as well as the new programming techniques that will relate to this relevance.

It is clear from this research that television content diversity is a wide and multi-level issue which has no fixed features and cannot be studied based on a concerted approach. The different television environments, different specificities of television audiences and different needs of television enterprises make the application of a constant concerted methodological approach for the assessment of content diversity difficult. The approach suggested in this research, provides a rational and practicable basis on which to create the conditions required for the establishment of a common philosophy with which to approach this issue. The application of an empirical analysis of Greek television provides the researcher with the opportunity to conduct future research by applying this analysis in other television environments, too. Beyond that, television as a medium may continue to transform and

evolve, however, content and diversity – especially with regard to the three aspects that were studied in this thesis – will always remain a basic point of reference and a crucial issue, which will continue to be of relevance to research into television.

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University Research Institute of Applied Communication, University of Athens:

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Research Institute of Applied Communication, Neapolis University, Pafos:

<http://www.nup.ac.cy/en-gb/researchnup/researchnup/imee.aspx>

Hellenic Audiovisual Institute: <http://www.iom.gr/>

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