



Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroep

Ex ante test in the Flemish community

Growing interference European Commission in PSB sector on the basis of State aid control

- » VRT and other PSB have raised competence issues throughout the revision of the Broadcasting communication
 - “control for manifest error”
 - “ex ante test” (including public consultation of competitors and MIA) and other supervisory bodies

Ex ante test in Flanders

- › What VRT should offer as PSB = political decision
- › Final aim Flemish government = good PSB service for a wide Flemish audience
- › Before the EC decision
 - Informal consultation or lobbying by different stakeholders + discussion at political level
 - In 2006 more formalised : Public consultation and academic report on future rol of VRT
 - Mid-term evaluation foreseen in current management agreement including the criteria for assesment
 - Economic situation Flemish media landscape
 - General media offer in Flanders
 - Technological evolutions
 - International tendencies
 - Protection and promotion of Flemish culture and identity
 - Expectations and needs of media consumer

Ex ante test in Flanders

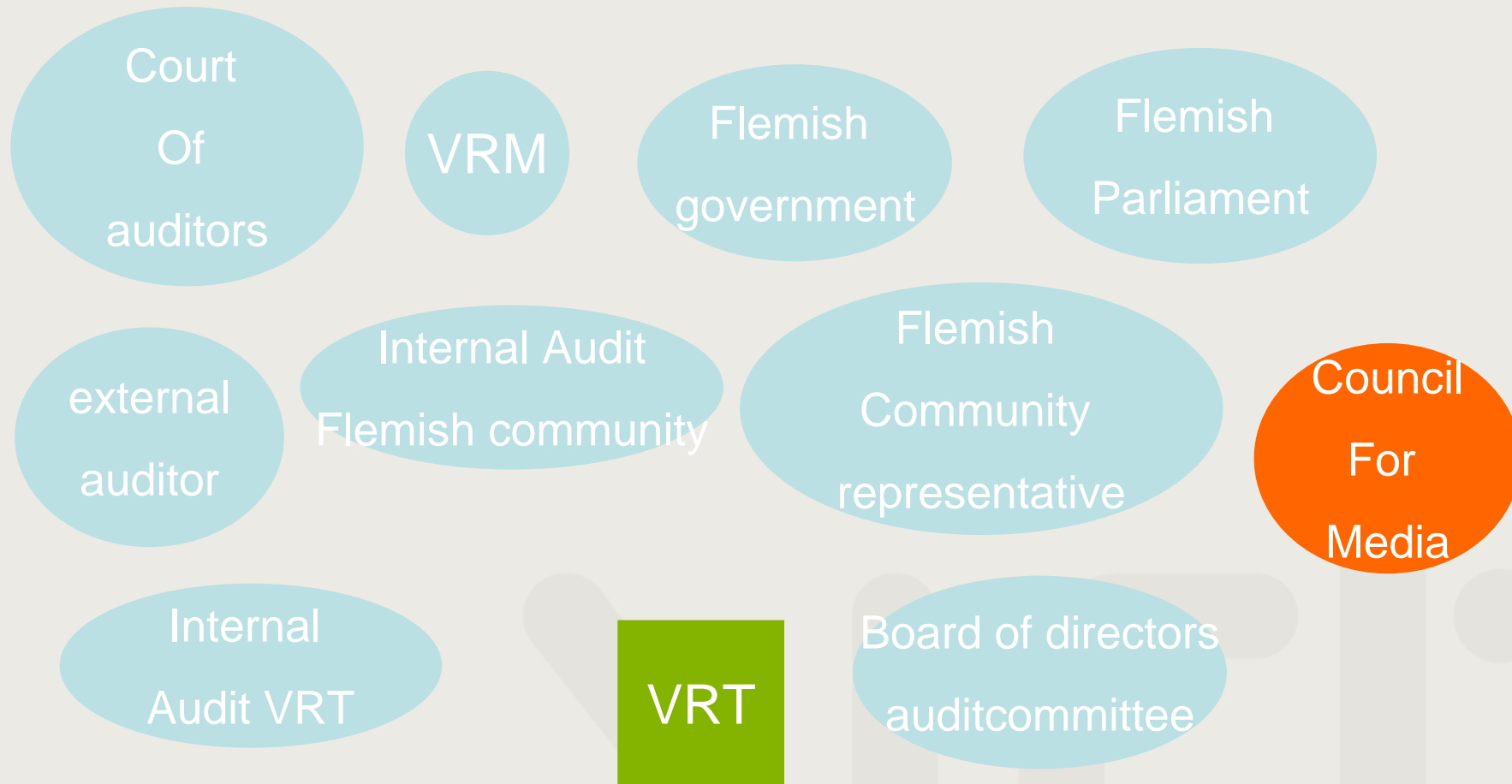
- ⇒ As part of the appropriate measures the Flemish government agrees to introduce two ex ante tests:
 - Before each management agreement
 - During a management agreement if new significant services are added that are not covered by the management agreement
 - Criteria for evaluation were copied from the current management agreement
 - Economic situation Flemish media landscape
 - General media offer in Flanders
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- ⇒ Good PSB service for the Flemish audience still central idea of Flemish government

Ex ante test in Flanders

- » Ex ante mechanism can help Flemish government to make well founded decision provided
 - objective well founded information and evaluation,
 - Need for rapid and flexibel procedure allowing PSB to adapt to new developments in the media
 - Editorial freedom PSB is fully respected
- » Possible positive consequences
 - greater legitimacy and less criticism on VRT remit
 - Work put into a clear and well founded definition should also lead to a correct financing (at the moment VRT seriously underfunded)
 - Possibility to adapt remit for new services not foreseen in management agreement with also correct financing
- » Concerns :
 - composition of the Council for the Media;
 - lack of funding of the Council for the Media

Overview of different organs supervising VRT at national level



Ex ante an additional administrative and costly burden upon Flemish community

- » Already impressive list of supervisory bodies
- » Ex ante additional administrative burden + cost
 - Initially 7 studies identified by Council for the Media for current on going ex ante test
 - In the end only 3 studies commissioned because of financial constraints → impact on quality of ex ante evaluation ?
- » What will happen if EC is confronted with complaint vis-à-vis a PSB service that has gone through ex ante testing ?